

Te Wahi Pounamu Place Stewardship Land



Brian Halliday (1934-1994) Bush Scene, Haast. Oil on canvas.

Landscape Values

Paula Smith BSc (Hons) Dip LA
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Landscape context for decision-making about stewardship land in Te Wahi Pounamu Place

Landscape is formally defined as “all aspects of the environment including its physical form, and all natural and cultural processes and systems, and the interactions of these systems.”

Landscapes are the outcome of many interconnected processes.

All landscapes are evolving. Even pre-human landscapes in Te Wahi Pounamu were constantly changing in response to natural forces, such as cell by cell growth or massive catastrophic landslips, but their character used to be 100% natural. When people arrived processes of modification began, as successive generations shaped the landscape to meet their needs and desires. Original vegetation was harvested or removed, landforms and drainage patterns altered, natural soils cultivated, and many things have been built.

In Te Wahi Pounamu Place the processes of modification have changed the river flat landscapes most. The original natural character landscapes of the river flats have morphed into a new cultural landscape where most South Westland people make their homes, and where food and other goods are produced. But even on the more modified river flats there are still fragments of original character surviving, adding visual interest and a sense of the past, contributing to overall ecosystem health, maintaining biodiversity benefits and helping to manage hydrology. Some of the remaining fragments are stewardship land.

The processes of landscape change have not stopped. If current trends continue it seems likely that over the next few generations much of the remaining indigenous vegetation which expresses underlying natural character in modified landscapes will be further modified or replaced.

The northern boundary of Te Wahi Pounamu Place is the Waitaha River. The southern boundary is Awarua Point (at the northern end of Big Bay *Tihei Mauri Ora*). The inland boundary follows the Main Divide.

The landscape of Te Wahi Pounamu Place is defined predominantly by an alternating pattern of braided river valleys and low hills with more mountainous country inland east of the alpine fault. Coastal swamps, lakes, lagoons and hapua are recurring elements which help to define landscape character.

Te Wahi Pounamu Place encompasses all the land within the West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy designated as the Te Wahipounamu *South-West New Zealand* World Heritage Area.

“This part of the West Coast *Te Tai o Poutini* contains some of the most remote and inaccessible mountain country in New Zealand including many of the country’s highest mountains, largest ice-fields and intact lowland forest ecosystems. The extensive sequences of public conservation lands are unique for their scale, complexity and diversity. State Highway 6 provides the best opportunity for travellers to see one of the last great unspoilt temperate wilderness landscapes left on earth” (CMS)

In this report the focus is on natural character (and to a much lesser extent historic character). This is because the stewardship land reclassification process is occurring under the Conservation Act 1987 and the purpose of this act is “to promote the conservation of New Zealand’s natural and historic resources”. “Conservation means the preservation and protection of natural and historic resources for the purpose of

- maintaining their intrinsic values,
- providing for their appreciation and recreational enjoyment by the public and
- safeguarding the options for future generations.”

The Department of Conservation’s West Coast *Te Tai o Poutini* Conservation Management Strategy 2010-2020 (CMS) sets out the desired outcomes for the whole West Coast region (p177-183), and for Te Wahi Pounamu Place (pp249-274)

Landscape outcomes sought for the region are:

“Within public conservation lands, natural, historical and cultural heritage is protected, maintained and enhanced.” (p177), and

“Where practicable, natural heritage is improved to a more natural state. The ecological integrity and natural character of managed sites is maintained or restored... The connectivity and natural functioning of mountain-sea ecosystems, lowland wetlands and riparian areas is improving.”(p181)

In Te Wahi Pounamu Place the landscape outcome sought is:

4.2.7.6 Geodiversity, landforms and landscapes in 2020

The overall character of geodiversity, landforms and landscapes in Te Wahi Pounamu Place is maintained in its 2010 condition.” (p256)

West Coast Regional Council also has statutory responsibility for Te Wahi Pounamu landscapes. In 2013 they commissioned two studies to inform their regional planning. **Brown Ltd** mapped areas of high and outstanding **natural character** first, which was followed by a report identifying Outstanding Natural Landscapes (ONLs) in the coastal zone. This was followed up with the addition of some inland ONLs.

Te Wahi Pounamu Place is governed by Westland District Council. The operative Westland District Plan 2002 addresses landscape issues with stated objective 3.10.3

“To maintain and protect the existing scenic and open and diverse character of Westland District, dominated by natural dynamic processes.”(p49)

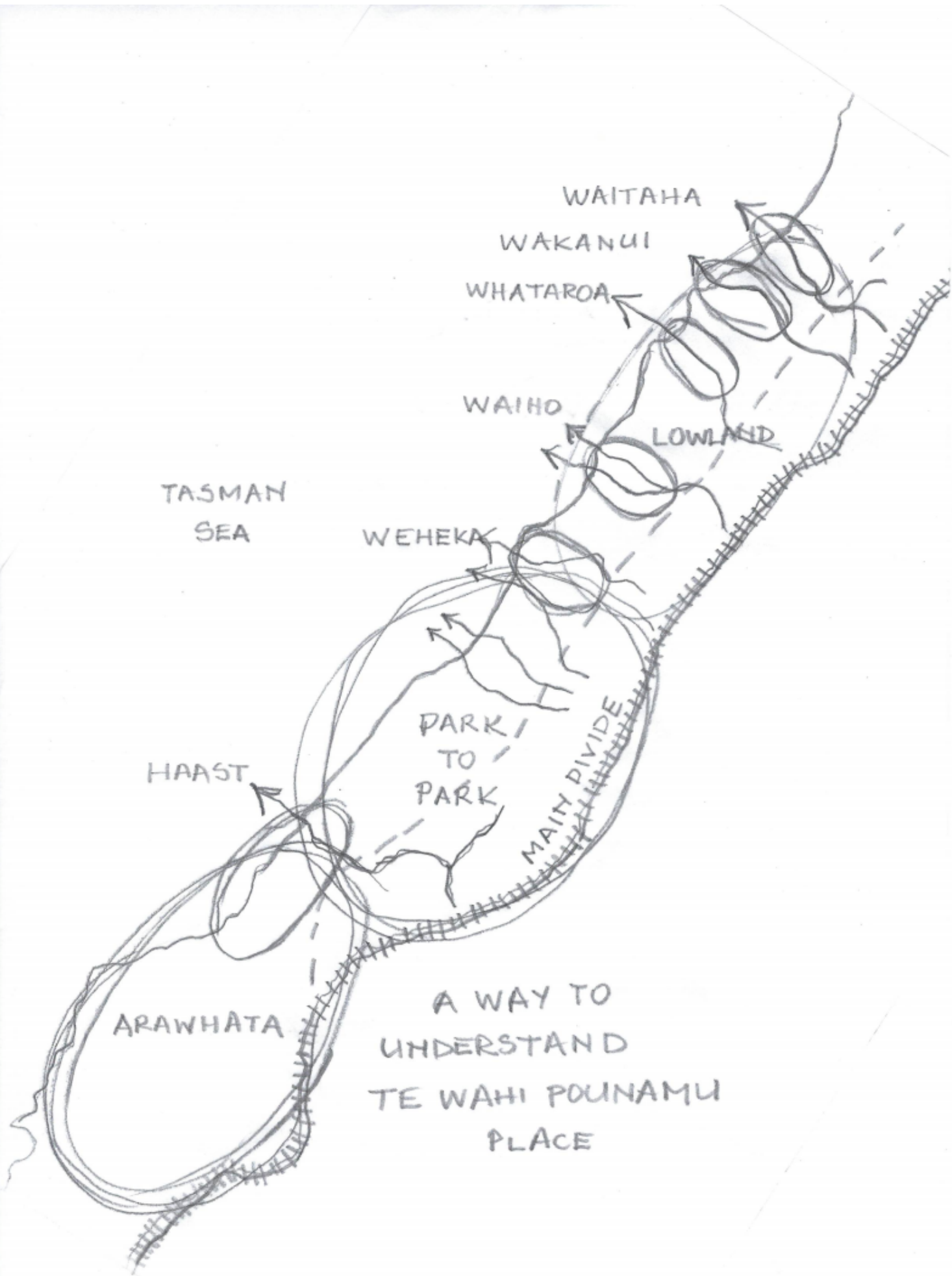
Policies and methods include a degree of reliance on the fact that “Some 85% of the District’s land area is managed under a conservation mandate, with tight controls over development...”.

Implementation is expected to achieve three Anticipated Environmental Outcomes including “Maintenance of the natural character of the mountains to the sea landscape in the south of the district, from Mikonui South”. (pp76-79)

A new combined district plan *Te Tai o Poutini* has been drafted using Brown's ONLs, but it is not yet operative. Quite a few stewardship land parcels fall into **Brown's high and outstanding natural character areas**, and some are also located in **ONLs identified in the draft *Te Tai o Poutini***.

One limitation of an approach identifying ONL's on the basis of natural character only is that tangata whenua landscape values and historic landscape values which may contribute to an areas outstanding quality are not taken into account in the rankings. However some of this information is provided in the conservation value reports for each stewardship cluster.

There are about 102 parcels of stewardship land in Te Wahi Pounamu Place. To better understand how each stewardship parcel fits within its wider landscape setting Te Wahi Pounamu Place is broken into five groupings with similar character. Stewardship parcels in each are identified and landscape factors discussed. Where part or all of a stewardship parcel falls into an **ONL** or **natural character unit** this is stated because this is a consideration which may need to be given some weight. That said, there are many areas of high natural character outside the boundaries of the units identified at a regional scale and stewardship lands by their nature are often in locations with high natural character.



A WAY TO
UNDERSTAND
TE WAHI POUNAMU
PLACE

Contents Te Wahi Pounamu Place

NaPalis	Report No.	Name of Conservation Area/Stewardship Land Parcel (area in hectares)	ONL	Natural Character
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Arawhata Wildlands

2801489	TWP48	Arawhata Conservation Area (10,7443ha)		
2801486	TWP48	High Street-Jackson Bay Conservation Area (0.3ha)		
2801492	TWP48	Lake Ellery Conservation Area (391ha)		
2801480	TWP46	Conservation Area – Arawhata (9,134ha)		
2801490	TWP46	Arawhata Riverbed Conservation Area (2,992ha)		
2800620	TWP46	Arawhata Conservation Area (23ha)		
2801098	TWP46	Waikatoto Valley Conservation Area (3,171ha)		
2800930	TWP43	Okuru-Waikatoto Conservation Area (17,314ha)		
2801484	TWP47	Neils Beach Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2801487	TWP47	Neils Beach Conservation Area (0.02ha)		
2800936	TWP45	Turnbull River Conservation Area (8ha)		
2800937	TWP45	Turnbull River Conservation Area (2ha)		
2800938	TWP45	Turnbull River Conservation Area (97ha)		
2800948	TWP43	Turnbull River Conservation Area (0.2ha)		
2800939	TWP44	Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (0.8ha)		
2800940	TWP44	Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (3ha)		
2800941	TWP43	Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (80ha)		
2800947	TWP43	Collyer Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha)		
2800946	TWP43	Nolans Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha)		
2801158	TWP41	Adair Road, Haast Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2801159	TWP41	Haast Field Centre Workshop Conservation Area(0.3ha)		
2800943	TWP40	Haast Visitor Centre Conservation Area (3ha)		
2800935	TWP43	Grassy Creek Conservation Area (55ha)		
2800944	TWP42	Grassy Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha)		
2800945	TWP42	Snapshot Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha)		

National Park to National Park

2804986	TWP36	Cook River/Weheka to Haast River CA (188,711ha)	several	T15
2800926	TWP39	Knights Point Conservation Area (0.8ha)	ONL10	C17
2804997	TWP36	Abbey Rocks Conservation Area (157ha)	ONL10	C17
2804999	TWP38	Dicks Creek Conservation Area (74ha)		
2805008	TWP36	Sandy Beach-Jacobs River Conservation Area (11ha)	ONL11	

2804995	TWP37	Jacobs River Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2804996	TWP37	Jacobs River Conservation Area (0.2ha)	ONL12	

Braided River Valleys (Te Wahi Pounamu)

2804986	TWP36	Cook River/Weheka to Haast River CA (188,711ha) parts	several	several
2804994	TWP36	Paringa Bridge Conservation Area (102ha)		T24
2804993	TWP36	Mahitahi Riverbed Conservation Area (92ha)		T26, T28
2805318	TWP34	Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area (1617ha)	ONL11	T41, T44
2805319	TWP34	Cook River/Weheka Flat Conservation Area (11ha)		
2805317	TWP32	Clearwater River Conservation Area (38ha)		
2805320	TWP35	Fox River Conservation Area (11.0542 ha)		T44
2805321	TWP33	Pekenga Drive Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2805322	TWP33	Pekenga Drive Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2805314	TWP27	Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha)		
2805312	TWP28	Waiho Flat Conservation Area (108ha)	ONL14	
2805312	TWP28	Waiho Flat Conservation Area (4ha)		
2805310	TWP28	Docherty Creek Conservation Area (18ha)		
2805277	TWP25	Docherty Creek Conservation Area (89ha)		
2805278	TWP25	Docherty Creek Conservation Area (Upper)(73ha)		
2805279	TWP25	Waiho River Conservation Area (1ha)		T47
2805304	TWP25	Waiho River Conservation Area (804ha)	ONL15	T47
2805311	TWP25	Waiho River Conservation Area (193ha)		T47
2805306	TWP25	Waiho River Mouth Conservation Area (9ha)	ONL15	C23
2805313	TWP25	Tartare Stream Conservation Area (20ha)		
2809663	TWP22	Upper Waitangitāhuna River Cons Area (123ha)	ONL15	T55
2809660	TWP21	Loan Block Road Conservation Area (91ha)		T52
2805257	TWP16	Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (39ha)		
2805256	TWP15	Waitangitāhuna River Mouth Cons Area (277ha)	ONL17	
2805651	TWP15	Roto Road Conservation Area (387ha)		
2805645	TWP18	Whataroa River Conservation Area (148ha)	ONL17	
2805650	TWP18	Saltwater Forest Conservation Area (177ha)		
2805653	TWP18	Whataroa River Conservation Area (72ha)		
2805658	TWP18	Whataroa River Conservation Area (80ha)		T56
2809664	TWP18	Whataroa River Conservation Area (27ha)		
2809671	TWP19	McCulloughs Creek Conservation Area (0.1ha)		
2805652	TWP20	Purcell Road Conservation Area (22ha)	ONL16	T56

2809665	TWP05	Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (53,835ha) (part)		T62 etc
2805649	TWP13	Poerua Riverbed Conservation Area (37ha)		T62
2805656	TWP13	Dry Creek Conservation Area (66ha)		T59
2805655	TWP13	Ferguson Creek Conservation Area (25ha)		
2805648	TWP10	Duart Creek Conservation Area (223ha)	ONL17	
2805644	TWP09	Poerua River Mouth Conservation Area (531ha)	ONL19	T62,C27
2805637	TWP06	Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area (1675ha)	ONL17	T63, C29
2805638	TWP08	La Fontaine Conservation Area (89ha)		

Te Wahi Pounamu Lowlands

2805316	TWP31	Gillespies Beach Conservation Area (112ha)		C24
2805308	TWP29	Waikupakupa River Conservation Area (70ha)	ONL15	T46
2805307	TWP29	Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area (34ha)	ONL15	T46
2805309	TWP30	Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area (1ha)	ONL15	T46
2805314	TWP27	Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha) (part on flat)?		
2805305	TWP26	Waiho River Conservation Area (hill) (137ha)	ONL15	T48
2805301	TWP05	Wahapo Conservation Area (114ha)	ONL15	T52
2805302	TWP05	Ōkārito Forks Conservation Area (88ha)	ONL15	T52
2805258	TWP24	Ōkārito Conservation Area (11ha)		
2805297	TWP24	Ōkārito Township Conservation Area (11ha)		
2805255	TWP14	Abut Head Conservation Area (63ha)	ONL17	C26,C27
2805650	TWP17	Saltwater Forest Conservation Area (28ha)	ONL17	T56
2805647	TWP12	Duart Creek Conservation Area (129ha)		
2805639	TWP08	Wanganui Forest Conservation Area (649ha)		T63
2805587	TWP08	La Fontaine Stream Conservation Area (10ha) part?		
280508	TWP08	Petersen Road Conservation Area (48ha)		
2805636	TWP03	Ilanthe Forest Conservation Area (1,404ha)	ONL20	T63
2805515	TWP03	Waitaha River Mouth Conservation Area (3ha)	ONL20	C28
2805516	TWP03	Ounatai Lagoon Conservation Area (48ha)	ONL?	C28
2809717	TWP04	Duffers Creek Conservation Area (287ha)	ONL21	
2809701	TWP02	Duffers Creek Conservation Area (0.3ha)		
2805640	HOK51	Pukekura Conservation Area (0.5ha)		
2805519	TWP01	Kākāpotahi Conservation Area (3ha)	ONL20	T66

Ka Tiritiri o Te Moana (Main Divide) Te Wahi Pounamu

2809665	TWP05	Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (53,835ha)	ONL14	several
2805303	TWP05	Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (3492ha)	ONL15	

2805303	TWP27	Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha) (part on hill)	ONL14	
2805315	TWP05	Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (2ha)		
2809661	TWP05	Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (19ha)		
2809662	TWP05	Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (19ha)		
2805654	TWP05	Ferguson Creek Conservation Area (63ha)	ONL18	
2805657	TWP11	Harihari SH6 Conservation Area (1ha)		
2805641	HOK52	Waitaha Forest Conservation Area (30,815ha)(part)	ONL22+	T60,T67

Arawhata Wildlands

From the Southland boundary at Big Bay to Haast River, and between the main divide and the Tasman Sea.

Mt Aspiring National Park, west of the main divide, protects the natural landscapes of a large part of this area. Multiple other conservation lands contribute.

Small enclaves of variously modified private land or non-PCL exist within what is almost wholly natural in its ecological functioning and outward appearance.

A significant amount of stewardship land is clustered together with multiple parcels of Arawata Conservation Area and Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area.

The Cascade, Arawhata, Waiatoto, Okuru and Turnbull Rivers and associated lagoons and river mouths have numerous whitebait stands and whitebait baches.

Together all the contiguous PCL south of the Haast River forms a diverse, cohesive and extraordinary wild landscape whole.

This part of South Westland is governed by Westland District Council. Westland is one of the three district councils working together on the [Te Tai o Poutini \(draft\) Plan](#).

Eight Outstanding Natural Landscapes covering the Arawhata Wildlands part of Te Wahi Pounamu Place are identified in [Te Tai o Poutini \(draft\) plan](#), schedule 5. They cover all the unmodified landscape south of Haast River. They are:

ONL1 Malcolm, McKenzie, & Hope Blue River Ranges

ONL2 Bonar Knob & Katake/Cascade Point

ONL3 Jackson Head & Stafford Ranges

ONL4 Ōkahu/Jackson Bay

ONL 5 Olivine & Haast Ranges

ONL6 Tititea/Mt Aspiring & Hinemakawe/Mt Castor

ONL7 Selborne, Browning, Mark, & Bealey Ranges

ONL8 Awarua/Haast River (part)

Nearly all of the stewardship land south of the Haast River is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL4 Ōkahu/Jackson Bay**. Site types and values are described as:

Vast and remote windswept stony beach immediately flanked by coastal forest that extends into an expansive plain. Includes several forest clad hill formations which rise dramatically from the plains.

Highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes – post glacial alluvial plain, interplay of river mouths and Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea. Vegetation patterns reinforce the exposure to Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea and the expansive planar landform.

Pristine lowland and swamp forest predominates with wetland areas surrounding the numerous waterbodies within this landscape.

Strongly defined by enclosing mountain ranges.

Key landmarks within this landscape are the forest clad hills of Mt Mclean and Mosquito Hill rising dramatically from the plains, the Arawhata, Waiatoto, Okuru, and Haast Rivers, and the vast stony beach of Jackson Bay

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL4.

In the [West Coast Region Natural Character Study \(Brown 2013\)](#) fourteen units south of the Haast River are assessed as having high or outstanding natural character. These include:

UnitT1 Hackett River (outstanding)

UnitT2 Gorge and Spoon Rivers (outstanding)
UnitT3 Hope River (outstanding)
UnitT4 Cascade River (outstanding)
UnitT5 Cascade & Martyr Rivers (high)
UnitT6 Jackson River, Upper Cascade & Martyr Rivers (outstanding)
UnitT7 Stafford River (outstanding)
UnitT8 Lake Ellery & Smoothwater River (outstanding)
UnitT9 Arawhata & Waiatoto Swampland (outstanding)
UnitT10 Arawhata River (outstanding)
UnitT11 Waiatoto River (outstanding)
UnitT12 Turnbull & Muller Rivers (outstanding)
UnitT13 Okuru River (outstanding)
UnitT14 Turnbull and Okuru Swampland (high)

In addition a number of coastal units have high or outstanding natural character:

UnitC1 Awarua Point to Cascade Bay (outstanding)
UnitC2 Halfway Bluff (outstanding)
UnitC3 Cascade Point to Jackson Head (outstanding)
UnitC4 Jackson Bay (high)
UnitC5 Neils Beach (outstanding)
UnitC6 Neils Beach settlement (high)
UnitC7 Arawhata River Mouth (outstanding)
UnitC8 Waiatoto River Mouth (high)
UnitC9 Waiatoto Lagoon & Wetland (outstanding)
UnitC10 Hannahs Clearing (high)
UnitC11 Okuru and Turnbull River Mouths (high)
UnitC12 Open Bay Islands (outstanding)
UnitC13 Haast Beach (high)
UnitC15 Haast River Mouth (high)

There are 25 parcels of stewardship land in this part of Te Wahi pounamu Place. They are:

- TWP48 Arawhata Conservation Area (10,7443ha) 2801489 in 30 parcels
- TWP48 High Street-Jackson Bay Conservation Area (0.3ha) 2801486
- TWP48 Lake Ellery Conservation Area(391ha) 2801492
- TWP46 Conservation Area – Arawhata (9,134ha) 2801480 in 33 parcels
- TWP46 Arawhata Riverbed Conservation Area (2,992ha) 2801490 in 5 parcels
- TWP46 Arawhata Conservation Area (23ha) 2800620
- TWP46 Waiatoto Valley Conservation Area (3,171ha) 2801098 in17 parcels
- TWP43 Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area (17,314ha) 2800930 in 79 parcels
- TWP47 Neils Beach Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2801484
- TWP47 Neils Beach Conservation Area (0.02ha) 2801487
- TWP45 Turnbull River Conservation Area (8ha) 2800936
- TWP45 Turnbull River Conservation Area (2ha) 2800937
- TWP45 Turnbull River Conservation Area (97ha) 2800938 in 2 parcels
- TWP43 Turnbull River Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2800948
- TWP44 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (0.8ha) 2800939
- TWP44 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (3ha) 2800940
- TWP43 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (80ha) 2800941 in 6 parcels

- TWP43 Collyer Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2800947
- TWP43 Nolans Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2800946
- TWP41 Adair Road, Haast Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2801158
- TWP41 Haast Field Centre Workshop Conservation Area (0.3ha) 2801159
- TWP40 Haast Visitor Centre Conservation Area (3ha) 2800943
- TWP43 Grassy Creek Conservation Area (55ha) 2800935
- TWP42 Grassy Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2800944
- TWP42 Snapshot Creek Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2800945

Landscape factors for decision-makers to consider:

- TWP48 **Arawhata Conservation Area** (10,7443ha) 2801489 in 30 parcels
This massive conservation area occupies nearly all the land between Mt Aspiring National Park and the coast. It is characterised by complexity, remoteness and high natural character with many notable landforms and landscape features.

The Arawhata River forms the east boundary with another long parcel of Arawhata Conservation Area (see below) between the river and the national park boundary which runs along the base of Waipara and Haast Ranges. Pyke Forest Conservation Area (in Southland) is contiguous to the south of Ararua Point. The conservation area includes coastal landscape from Awarua Point to Jackson Head and Neils Beach. The landward edge of Hautai Marine Reserve, between Longridge and Awarua Points links with Arawhata Conservation Area.

Together all the contiguous PCL forms a cohesive and extraordinary wild landscape whole.

The Olivine Range massif is cut in half by the boundary of Mt Aspiring National Park. The northern half of the Olivine Range rising to Staircase Mountain 1660m and Dagon 1683m is included in Arawhata Conservation Area.

The modified landscape enclave at Cascade is not part of Arawhata Conservation Area. Evidence of human activity extends down river with whitebait settlement along the Cascade River and at the river mouth. The Jacksons River Road passes through the conservation area providing access to the farmed Cascade valley. It follows the Jackson River up to Martyr Saddle.

Arawhata Conservation Area encircles Lake Ellery and Lake Mary. Lake Ellery itself is also stewardship land (see below) but Lake Mary and land immediately surrounding it are not PCL.

Lakes Clarke, Leeb, Dan, and Bux are also not included in Arawhata Conservation Area even though they are completely encircled. Numerous other lakes are part of the stewardship land area.

Arawhata Conservation Area connects with settlements at Jacksons Bay and Neils Beach. It includes some beach landscape and some separate parcels on the banks of the lower Arawhata River. There is also a small square outlier on the inland side of the Haast-

Jacksons Road which is very similar to the Neils Beach Conservation Areas described below.

- **TWP48 High Street-Jackson Bay Conservation Area** (0.3ha) 2801486
This forested section is surrounded by Arawhata Conservation Area at the end of the Haast-Jacksons Bay Road. It lies alongside the Wharekai-Te Kou Walk and includes a car park for track users. It appears to be well integrated with surrounding landscape, but may also have historic value as part of the aspirational planned settlement at Jacksons Bay, regionally significant as one of only two government-sponsored special settlements on the West Coast.
- **TWP48 Lake Ellery Conservation Area** (391ha) 2801492 includes the whole lake but little or no land around it. It is embedded within the Arawhata Conservation Area. Its landscape character is entirely natural.
- **TWP47 Neils Beach Conservation Area** (0.1ha) 2801484
A small area of lowland forest on alluvial flats on the inland side of the Haast-Jackson Bay Road near Neils Beach. Although the parcel is cadastrally isolated from other PCL, it is not ecologically isolated, being surrounded forest and shrublands on neighbouring freehold and Māori Land Court Arawhata 1 Block. This parcel adjoins cemetery reserve containing historic Arawhata Pioneer Cemetery, associated with the early Jackson Bay colonial settlers. It is currently unknown whether burial sites also exist within this Neils Beach Conservation Area.
- **TWP47 Neils Beach Conservation Area** (0.02ha) 2801487
Another tiny fragment of lowland forest on alluvial flats on the inland side of the Haast-Jackson Bay Road at Neils Beach. Although the parcel is cadastrally isolated from other PCL, it is not ecologically isolated, being surrounded by forest and shrublands on neighbouring freehold and Māori Land Court Arawhata 1 Block.
- **TWP46 Conservation Area – Arawhata** (9,134ha) 2801480 in 33 parcels
A large part of this conservation area is coastal wetland between Jacksons Bay beach and Mt Watney 1503m and Mt Heveldt 1416m which are in Mt Aspiring National Park. Roches moutonees Mt McLean 671m and Macfarlane Mound 127m emerge from the swamp. Waiatoto River forms its northern boundary, with the coastal settlement of Waiatoto at the river mouth. Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area on the other side of the Waiatoto River is a very similar landscape. Haast-Jacksons Bay Road passes through the middle of both. This part of Arawhata Conservation Area encircles Lake Nissan but does not include it.

The other part of this conservation area extends up river flats on the north bank of Arawhata River connecting the national park slopes of the Haast Range with the Arawhata River bed. The riverbed is also conservation area. Most of the river flats are forested and visually indistinguishable from the national park landscape upslope but some of the flats are open grassland which is grazed.
- **TWP46 Arawhata Riverbed Conservation Area** (2,992ha) 2801490 in 5 parcels
Arawhata River is a wide braided river with white gravels and clear water which has its

source at the main divide high in Mt Aspiring National Park. Arawhata Riverbed Conservation Area includes the whole river bed from Ten Hour Creek to the sea.

Arawhata Riverbed Conservation Area is contiguous with Arawhata Conservation Area on both sides. A modified enclave called Callery Flat on the south bank is excluded from both conservation areas.

- TWP46 **Waiatoto Valley Conservation Area** (3,171ha) 2801098 17 parcels

This is a long valley parcel which penetrates into Mt Aspiring National Park up the Waiatoto River to Ferny Flat and with a branch up Te Naihi River. It includes alluvial flats and lower slopes. Mostly forested with little apparent modification apart from huts and some grazing on the valley floor.

It seems surprising that this land was excluded when the National Park was surveyed as it is intimately connected both ecologically and in landscape terms.

- TWP43 **Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area** (1,7314ha) 2800930 in 79 parcels

Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area is very similar to the coastal wetland part of Arawhata Conservation Area above. It has two larger blocks either side of the Turnbull and Okuru Rivers with some smaller parts between the two rivers. They are beautifully patterned by variations in the vegetation resulting from the underlying drainage network.

The southern part, lies between the Jackson Bay beach and the The Woolsack 1523m at the end of the Selborne Range in Mt Aspiring National Park. The beachside settlement of Hannahs Clearing is at one boundary. Gill Hill is the emergent roche moutonee in this part.

The Haast-Jacksons Bay road runs along Haast beach at the coastal edge of the northern part of Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area, with another long narrow parcel of the conservation area between the road and the beach. Roches moutonees Mt Browne 244m and Bain Hill 168m rise out of the surrounding wetlands. The settlement of Haast Beach and the Haast landfill are excluded.

This northern part also includes a river valley extension right up the Okuru River to the Swift Water confluence. The river valley and lower slopes are largely forested but open river flats are grazed. There is an airstrip on one alluvial terrace. Like the Waiatoto River Conservation Area this extension penetrates far into the Mt Aspiring National Park.

There are also a number of discrete parcels around the hapua at the converging mouths of Turnbull and Okuru Rivers, some of which are contiguous with Scenic Reserve (Cuttance Road, Okuru, Haast), Okuru-Waiatoto Scenic Reserve and Okuru Scenic Reserve, all near the settlement of Okuru. Two parcels of Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area (see below) and a couple of fragments of Okuru Marginal Strip also contribute to the value of clustered conservation lands here.

The flat land along the meandering lower reaches of Okuru River and Turnbull River has been cleared and drained for farming. The central parts of the Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area are sandwiched between these two modified areas and, except for an area near Nolans Creek which is cultivated and grazed, is all wetland extending inland right up to the toe of the inland slope. These steeply rising lower slopes of the Browning

Range are also included in the stewardship land parcel up to the boundary of Mt Aspiring National Park at about 1400m.

An additional part of Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area, separated from the rest, includes river valley land up the Turnbull River, forested on the lower hill slopes and with grazed river flats along the braided river. This long parcel extends some distance up into Mt Aspiring National Park to the base of The Round Hill.

This part of Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area is an enclave within the national park. It is intimately connected with the ecology and landscape of the surrounding national park land. Like the other two other valleys penetrating the national park it was probably excluded at the time the park was created to allow for the continued grazing by stock, an activity which is not allowed under the National Parks Act 1980.

As stock can be vectors for invasive plant pests the continued grazing of these valleys is an ongoing biodiversity threat to the national park values

- **TWP 45 Turnbull River Conservation Area** (97ha) 2800938

These two are the uppermost of a group of four discrete riparian parcels spread out along the lower reaches of the Turnbull River as it passes through modified terraces on either side. Several sections of Turnbull River Marginal Strip are also associated with this stretch of the river. They include some riverbed, channel, banks and alluvial terraces in a former scroll plain landscape. They appear to be unfenced and grazed as part of the adjacent farmland.

As all the surrounding riverside land has been cleared and drained for pasture these parcels have value as braided river habitat, riparian protection and potentially as natural character islands in their otherwise modified setting, connecting visually and ecologically with various ecosystems in surrounding PCL. This value could be enhanced by restoration at some time in the future.

- **TWP45 Turnbull River Conservation Area** (2ha) 2800937

This is the middle parcel of the group of four described above. It includes river gravels, a section of channel and some modified riverbank.

- **TWP45 Turnbull River Conservation Area** (8ha) 2800936

This is the downstream parcel of the group of four described above. All of these parcels have value as braided river habitat, riparian protection and potentially as natural character islands in their otherwise modified setting, connecting visually and ecologically with various ecosystems in surrounding PCL.

- **TWP43 Turnbull River Conservation Area** (0.2ha) 2800948 is a small square forested parcel beside a legal road just outside the boundary of Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area off the Turnbull Road which goes to the power station on the north bank of the Turnbull river. It is indistinguishable from the neighbouring conservation area and from surrounding land which is not PCL which all has fairly high natural character.

- **TWP43 Collyer Creek Conservation Area** (0.2ha) 2800947

Collyer Creek Conservation Area is a small rectangle of land on the boundary of Okuru Waiatoto Conservation Area, near where meandering Collyer Creek leaves the

conservation area. It appears indistinguishable from neighbouring stewardship land, and from the other non-PCL around it.

- **TWP44 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area** (3ha) 2800940

This stewardship land parcel occupies a visually sensitive site on the edge of the Okuru/Turnbull hapua, between Cuttance Road and the current main channel of Turnbull River. The area beside Turnbull River is used for white baiting during the whitebait season. It is open and exposed, unfenced and grazed under concession as part of the adjacent farmland.

- **TWP44 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area** (0.8ha) 2800939

This second parcel is similar to the one above, occupying a site between Cuttance Road and the edge of the hapua. It too is unfenced and grazed under concession as part of the adjacent farm.

- **TWP43 Okuru-Turnbull River Conservation Area** (80ha) 2800941 in 6 parcels

This larger Okuru Turnbull Conservation Area spans a wide strip of lowland swamp forest between Hapuka and Turnbull Rivers, near the settlement of Okuru. Meandering Hapuka River which forms the boundary around two sides is tidal at this location so some saline vegetation is included. The South Turnbull Road passes through the Turnbull River end. It includes part of the Hapuka Estuary Walk.

Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area connects across Hapuka River to the south, otherwise the conservation Area appears to be surrounded by non-PCL.

- **TWP43 Nolans Creek Conservation Area** (0.2ha) 2800946

Nolans Creek Conservation Area is a small polygon of land on the boundary of Okuru Waiatoto Conservation Area, near where Nolans Creek leaves the conservation area. It appears to have been stripped of native vegetation and has a track through it.

- **TWP41 Adair Road, Haast Conservation Area** (0.1ha) 2801158

Haast settlement is set back into the Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area and is surrounded by natural character landscape. The Adair Road conservation area is a section within Haast settlement used for residential and workshop purposes.

- **TWP41 Haast Field Centre Workshop Conservation Area** (0.3ha) 2801159

The DOC field base in the Haast settlement is surrounded on three sides by Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area and retains a block of original vegetation linking the site ecologically and visually with its natural character surroundings.

- **TWP40 Haast Visitor Centre Conservation Area** (3ha) 2800943

The Haast Visitor Centre site includes a wetland and (planted?) native vegetation as well as car parking and road access. Part of the huge Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area covering the Haast Riverbed is just across the Haast Pass Highway SH6.

- **TWP43 Grassy Creek Conservation Area** (55ha) 2800935

Grassy Creek Conservation Area is beside the Haast Pass Highway SH6. It contains

lowland alluvial podocarp forest, which appears to have been logged relatively recently. Also wetland and some pasture. It is located is not far from the northern boundary of Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area and is connected by Grassy Creek, with its pair of marginal strips, to a nearby riverbank parcel of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area at Zillion Hill

- TWP42 **Grassy Creek Conservation Area** (0.2ha) 2800944

This small square conservation area is located in non-PCL land between Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area and the larger Grassy Flat Conservation Area (see above). Grassy Creek is a short distance away. It may have been forested but appears to have been recently logged and now includes bare land, with some curious strips of forest left in situ.

- TWP42 **Snapshot Creek Conservation Area** (0.2ha) 2800945

Snapshot Creek is a square randomly located conservation area separated from nearby Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area by modified non-PCL land. It does not include any of the Snapshot Creek waterway. It may previously have been forested and is now cleared but appears to be regenerating.

- All of the stewardship land south of the Haast River is Outstanding Natural Landscape, visually and ecologically contiguous and connected into a cohesive whole. Modifications are slight and peripheral, inconsequential in terms of the scale of the whole. In some cases they add value by expressing the folly of human endeavour in the face of such remote wildness or by making an environment which might be experienced as intimidating a little more hospitable.
- Consideration could be given to including all this stewardship land land ki uta ki tai into neighbouring Mt Aspiring National Park. This possibility is signalled in the current Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan 2011 which seeks Overall Park Outcome:

“Mount Aspiring National Park is a place which retains its essential character, as New Zealand’s remote and undeveloped alpine national park, and where...a range of ecosystems, natural features and scenery is preserved within its boundaries”(p23)

In section 6.4.1 Boundaries and additions to the park it says:

“Several areas managed by the department that adjoin the park have been identified in earlier park management plans as warranting inclusion in the park. They include...Conservation lands to the west of the park containing lowland forest and fluvio-glacial coastal plains not currently represented in the park...”

and adding:

“Previous management plans for the park have identified conservation lands to the west as possible additions to the park but, to date, no steps have been taken to further that goal. These primarily lowland forest and wetland ecosystems are nationally significant and their inclusion would complete the sequence of ecosystems represented in the park from the Main Divide to, or near, the sea. While these western conservation lands are clearly worthy of

national park status, their addition to Mount Aspiring National Park is one of a number of options, including the option of a new national park in South Westland.” (pages 50-51)

The view could be taken that landscape currently farmed around Turnbull River which intrudes into otherwise natural character surroundings is sufficiently modified to require exemption or division. This is a short term view which will perpetuate the intrusion. At some future time an opportunity will arise to include this land with the rest and allow for the restoration of its natural character so the remarkable landscape is entire again.

There is no valid landscape reason to divide or compartmentalise any of the stewardship lands south of Haast in ways which might result in diverging landscape futures.

The coastal swamplands which extends from Jackson Head to the Bald Hill massif are divided into four or five distinct sections separated by braided rivers pushing through toward the sea. The whole complex is only complete if the section north of Haast River is also included. Each section has emergent roches moutonees, slower moving meandering streams snaking though the wetland and extraordinarily expressive vegetation patterns, only fully appreciated when viewed from above.

The parcel of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area containing coastal swamp immediately north of Haast River, which includes the Waita River, is part of the same land system. It is ecologically and visually indistinguishable from the three or four sections of similar wetland south of Haast, between the Okuru, Turnbull, Waiatoto and Arawhata river mouths. All four/five sections should be managed together and this part of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area would logically be grouped with the others, all with the same classification.

While all the conservation areas south of Haast River may be worthy of national park status, these swamplands are a distinctive landscape of national significance, potentially part of our national identity in the way Lindis Pass or the Tongaririo Crossing are. Consideration could be given to a classification which recognises this.

National Park to National Park

This part of the Te Wahi Pounamu Place is dominated by the Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area, a massive area of stewardship land covering most of the mountainous, foothill and coastal lowland, between Mt Aspiring National Park to the south and Westland Tai Poutini National Park to the north, from the main divide to the Tasman Sea.

The southern part is mountainous right to the coast, creating a spectacular rocky interface. North of Buttress Point coastal land is more often level or gently graded up to the foothills of the Southern Alps, with only the occasional granite outcrop or moraine ridge extending right to the sea. Natural vegetation patterns associated with drainage variation are a feature.

The area is extremely diverse in both ecosystems and species.

Very high natural character throughout, with the exception of one or two remote enclaves. Modified braided river valleys are not considered here: Paringa, Mahitahi, Makawhio (Jacobs Creek), Manakiaua, and Karangarua valleys are considered in the Braided River Valleys chapter.

This part of South Westland is governed by the Westland District Council. Westland is one of the three district councils working together on *Te Tai o Poutini (draft)* Plan.

Six areas of Outstanding Natural Landscape are identified in *Te Tai o Poutini (draft)* plan, schedule 5. They cover all the unmodified landscape up the Haast River and north from the river mouth to Cook Bluff just south of the mouth of Weheka/Cook River) They are:

ONL8 Awarua/Haast River

ONL9 Landsborough River Valley and Mt Hooker

ONL10 Bald, Moeraki and Paringa Hill

ONL11 Mahitahi/Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff

ONL12 Mahitahi, Makaawhio/Jacobs River, and Karangarua Foothills

ONL13 Strachan and Bannock Brae Ranges

In the *West Coast Region Natural Character Study (Brown 2013)* eight units associated with the area from Haast River to Cook River/Weheka have high or outstanding natural character. These include:

Unit T15 Tawharekiri Lakes & Waita River (outstanding)

Unit T16 Haast River (outstanding)

Unit T17 Wills, Burke & Upper Haast Rivers (outstanding)

Unit T18 Landsborough and Clarke River (outstanding) extends way up the main divide

Unit T19 Whakpohai River (outstanding)

Unit T20 Moeraki River & Lake (outstanding)

Unit T21 Otoko & Paringa Rivers (outstanding)

Unit T22 Paringa Lake (outstanding)

There are also a number of coastal units with high or outstanding natural character in this part:

Unit C14 Haast River Mouth (outstanding)

Unit C15 Haast River Mouth (high)

Unit C16 Waita River Ship Creek (outstanding)

Unit C17 Moeraki & Paringa Coast (outstanding)

Unit C18 Paringa River Mouth (high)

Unit C19 Buttress Point-Heretaniwha Point (outstanding)

Unit C20 Makawhio Point (outstanding)

There are seven parcels of stewardship land in this part of South Westland:

- TWP36 Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area(188,711ha) 2804986 in 321 parcels
- TWP39 Knights Point Conservation Area (0.8ha) 2800926
- TWP36 Abbey Rocks Conservation Area (157ha) 2804997 in 5 parcels
- TWP38 Dicks Creek Conservation Area (74ha) 2804999
- TWP36 Sandy Beach-Jacobs River Conservation Area (11ha) 2805008
- TWP37 Jacobs River Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2804995
- TWP37 Jacobs River Conservation Area (0.2ha) 2804996

Landscape Factors for decision-makers to take into consider:

- TWP36 **Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area** (188,711ha) 2804986 in 321 parcels

This massive conservation area extends from Haast River to Cooks River. Only some modified valley floors are excluded: Paringa River valley, Mahitahi and Makawhero valleys, Karangarua flats and Cook River flats.

Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area includes all the braided river bed and terraces of the Haast River right up to Pleasant Flat, and branching into the Landsborough Valley where it includes slopes up to the main divide boundary of Te Wahi Pounamu place and Westland District. It is contiguous with Hooker Landsborough Wilderness Area and meets Westland National Park to the north.

Mt Aspiring National Park forms the boundary to the south and the conservation area encircles some outlying parcels of national park land in the Landsborough Valley.

There are also three clumps of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area on the south bank of the Haast River at Zillion Hill, Xmas Flat and Cron Flat. The upstream two are contiguous with Mt Aspiring National Park and the downstream one is just across the road from Okuru-Waiatoto Conservation Area, near the Haast Visitor Centre.

The conservation area incorporates the mouth of the Haast River which meets the Tasman Sea directly without forming a hapua. Swamp land to the north has much in common with the coastal plains landscape south of the river mouth in Okuru-Waiatoto and Arawhata Conservation Areas, with emergent roches moutonees Mosquito Mountain 583m and Bayou Hill 90m, Tuwharekiri lakes, meandering waterways and intriguing vegetation patterns related to drainage variations.

Natural character is high throughout. Lakes Moeraki and Paringa and other smaller lakes are a feature.

Whitebait huts have been built along the lower reaches of many rivers and at river mouths including the Haast, Waita, Whakapohai, Moeraki (Blue), Paringa, Ohinemaka, Makawhio (Jacobs), and Manakaiaua Rivers. Whitebait baches are recurring feature in the landscape.

There are small outlying sections of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area on the river flats at Paringa. These and other valley floor fragments are considered as part of modified flood plain landscapes in the Braided River Valleys chapter.

Parts of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area are included in **Outstanding Natural Landscapes** *ONL9 Landsborough River Valley and Mt Hooker, ONL10 ONL11 Mahitahi/Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff, ONL12 Mahitahi, Makawhio/Jacobs River, and Karangarua Foothills and ONL13 Strachan and Bannock Brae Ranges*. Site types and values are slightly different for each ONL but as an example, for *ONL10 Bald, Moeraki and Paringa Hill* they are:

Series of steep craggy headlands backed by forest clad foothills and valleys that are heavily dissected and contain two prominent lake basins: Lake Moeraki and Tāwhirāupo/Lake Paringa.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea with its continuous mature coastal and lowland forest vegetation cover providing a consistent patterning to this exposed landscape.

Combination of glacial sculpted terrain with continuous vegetation cover, high relief, and the tranquillity of the lakes opening up views up and down the valley basins reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Assemblage of ridges, peaks, and mountaintops of similar orientation, altitude, vegetative cover and appearance.

Lake Moeraki, Tāwhirāupo/Lake Paringa, and Heretaniwha Point are key landmarks with this unit.

Knights Point lookout provides dramatic elevated views of the coastline

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL10.

Because it is so big and varied Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area includes at least twelve of the high and outstanding natural character units listed above within its boundaries.

The parcel of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area containing lowland swamp immediately north of Haast River is part of the same land system as is ecologically and visually indistinguishable from the three sections of similar wetland south of Haast, between the Onuku, Turnbull, Waiatoto and Arawhata river mouths. All four sections should be managed together and this part of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area would logically be grouped with the others under the same classification.

This part is assessed as an outstanding natural character *Unit T15 Tawharekiri Lakes & Waita River*. Key attributes/characteristics cited are:

Vast area of swampland across a post glacial alluvial plain that comprises a number of lakes, braided and singular river channels, interspersed with several low lying hills (Bayou Hill).

Very extensive and homogenous mature forest cover, flanked by unmodified landforms to the south-east including Mataketake Range, Bald and Mosquito Hill.

Mix of aggregate sizes and weathered boulders that are constantly sifted and graded by the varying flows.

Unmodified and unconstrained riverbeds flanked by tall swamp forest impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Surrounding landforms and their dramatic profile give the river a sense of wildness.

Other tributaries/waterbodies include Maori River and Bayou Creek.

The combination of unmodified landforms, continuous pristine vegetation cover, and a range of river typologies and aggregate sizes give this landscape a raw, wild and remote character.

Apart from the Haast Paringa track the entire area is devoid of development / modification.

Consideration could be given to managing all the rest of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area as one entity, together with any contiguous conservation areas which are not part of a modified valley floor landscape. Including any adjacent or proximal coastal stewardship land would strengthen and enhance the diversity of ecosystems in such a unit, which would be notable for its strong ki uta ki tai qualities.

(See also Arawhata Wildlands chapter)

- TWP39 **Knights Point Conservation Area** (0.8ha) 2800926 is a small roadside rest area and viewpoint with car parking, toilets and a monument. It is on a coastal cliff near Knights Point. The surrounding vegetation appears natural but there is large slip below the car park extending down to the foreshore below.

This conservation area is included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL10 Bald, Moeraki and Paringa Hill**, details as above.

It is also located in outstanding coastal natural character *Unit C17 Moeraki & Paringa Coast*. Key attributes/characteristics cited are:

Remote and isolated sequence of exposed coastal slopes, points, rocky shoals, outcrops, islets, bluffs, broad beaches, and eroded dune lands and wetlands.

Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, windswept vegetation which impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Continuous pristine mature coastal and lowland forest cover.

Striking interface with the Tasman Sea. Sheer cliffs and scarps plunge dramatically into the sea, some of which can be seen from Knights Point lookout.

With the exception of SH6 which traverses the southern end of this unit, several tracks and huts, this area is largely unmodified.

Strong elevated relief reinforced by indigenous vegetation patterns.

- TWP36 **Abbey Rocks Conservation Area** (157ha) 2804997 in 5 parcels is located on the coastal escarpment rising to 264m overlooking Abbey Rocks off shore. Vegetation is natural, a wind shorn mosaic of low forest and shrubland running down to the beach below. There are cliffs above the sea at the southern end and Pearson Creek and other short waterways pass through on their way to the sea.

Abbey Rocks Conservation Area is included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL10 Bald, Moeraki and Paringa Hill**, details as above.

Abby Rocks Conservation Area are also in outstanding natural character *Unit C17 Moeraki & Paringa Coast* (as above).

- TWP38 **Dicks Creek Conservation Area** (74ha) 2804999

Dicks Creek Conservation Area is on the steep lower slopes of Ward Hill 544m. It runs down to the Paringa river flats and is visible from the Haast Highway SH6. It contains a quarry with access track. Dicks Creek and another unnamed water way pass through the conservation area. It is forested to the lower boundary contrasting with neighbouring land on the flats which are cleared for farming and cultivated. Dicks Creek Conservation Area is located against the Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area which

forms its boundary on two sides. Ecologically and visually they are indistinguishable from each other apart from the current existence of the quarry in Dicks Creek. If the land use in Dicks Creek Conservation Area were to change an unsympathetic boundary would become obvious over time.

- **TWP36 Sandy Beach-Jacobs River Conservation Area** (11ha) 2805008 is at the mouth of Makawhio River (aka Jacobs River). It is a strip which runs along the beach from an access road off SH6 almost to the river mouth. It is almost connected to a similar beach front parcel of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area to the south.

It is located in a coastal part of **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL11 Mahitahi/Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff**. Site Type and values cited are:

Remote and isolated coastline comprising broad sandy beaches, coastal cliffs, bluffs, and craggy headlands backed by expansive low lying swampland, glacial shorn hills, and braided river mouths.

Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, windswept vegetation and isolated beach fronts impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/ the Tasman Sea – sheer cliffs at Mahitahi, Makaawhio/Jacobs, Karangarua, and Cook Bluff plunge dramatically into the sea – Weheka/Cook & Karangarua River mouths are highly expressive of the landscapes natural processes.

High coastal exposure and orientation towards Te Tai-o-Rēhua/ the Tasman Sea.

Vast unmodified sequences of native forest enclosed by glacial shorn hills reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape. Mature wind swept rimu forest on Sandy Beach.

Mahitahi/Bruce Bay was the landing place of Polynesian explorer Maui

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL11.

Sandy Beach is also included in an outstanding natural Character *Unit C20 Makawhio Point*.

- **TWP37 Jacobs River Conservation Area** is a tiny polygonal roadside parcel set into Jacobs River Scenic Reserve just north of the SH6 bridge over Makawhio River by the Jacobs River settlement. It is forested and seems indistinguishable from surrounding scenic reserve.
- **TWP37 Jacobs River Conservation Area** The second is located just as the highway SH6 emerges from forested Jacobs River Scenic Reserve to cross the Manakaiaua plain. It is forested and seems indistinguishable from surrounding forest which is not growing on PCL.

This second parcel is located within **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL12 Mahitahi, Makaawhio/Jacobs River, and Karangarua Foothills**. Stated site type and values are:
Sequence of north-west facing mountain ranges that front on to an expansive swamp and farming plain.

Interplay of mature indigenous forest and vegetative sequence from lowland beech forest through to alpine scrub communities reinforcing topography and pronounced relief. Exposed peaks and ridge tops revealing underlying geology are highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes.

Combination of etched ridge lines, rocky outcrops, expansive permanent ice flows, glacial lakes, vegetation sequences giving way to raw and exposed peaks and ridges reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Assemblage of ridges, peaks, and mountaintops of similar orientation, attitudes, vegetative cover and appearance.

Braided River Valleys (in Te Wahi Pounamu Place)

A rhythmic series of braided river valleys drain the alps generally flowing east to west across the lowland landscapes and transporting huge volumes of stone and gravels from the mountains to the sea. Braided rivers with their distinct, well drained gravel floodplains are generally suited to farming in a high rainfall climate.

The West Coast has 19% of all New Zealand's braided rivers and most are in Te Wahi Pounamu Place, with some more in Hokitika Place to the north.

Braided rivers are a threatened environment in Aotearoa New Zealand. Water quality, ecological health, wairua and the mauri of water bodies is directly related to how upstream and surrounding land is managed.

Paringa, Mahitahi, Makawhio, Manakaiaua, Karangarua, Weheka, Waitangitaona and Whataroa, Poerua, Wanganui and Waitaha: the braided rivers created their own alluvial valleys. They create the floodplains and can quite easily take parts of them away.

This chapter includes BOTH modified flood plain and braided riverbeds and riparian land. It includes modified floodplains from the Park to Park area too, at Paringa, Mahitahi, Makawhio (Jacobs Creek) and Karangarua.

The reason for grouping the braided rivers together is to highlight how much stewardship land is associated with this landscape type. In Te Wahi Pounamu Place at least three big braided river systems and some smaller ones are legally protected almost ki uta ki tai, Weheka, Waiho, and Wakanui/Wanganui (there are two in Hokitika Place as well; Taramakau and Hokitika). In other Places braided rivers conservation lands are more fragmented.

How these dynamic open systems are best classified and managed to maintain and enhance their landscape values for future generations will require careful consideration. Minimising edge effects is not always achievable with braided river systems but optimising connectivity and riparian protection will support the healthy functioning of braided river landscapes. Bigger is better, particularly allowing space for natural channel changes wherever possible.

In general modified flood plains associated with braided rivers are not assessed as outstanding landscapes, but mountainous headwaters and upper braided rivers often are. In some cases the river mouths and hapua are considered outstanding, particularly if there are dramatic headlands involved. In Schedule 5 of *Te Taio o Poutini (draft)* plan parts of several braided rivers are included in Outstanding Natural Landscapes. The most relevant ones are:

ONL11 Mahitahi/ Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff

ONL15 Koihaihai/ Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff

ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers

ONL19 Pouerua hāpua/Saltwater Lagoon

In the West Coast Region Natural Character Study (Brown 2013) most braided rivers in Te Wahi Pounamu Place are assessed as having high or outstanding natural character. These are:

Unit T55 Upper Waitangitaona River (outstanding)

Unit T57 Whataroa River Flats (high)

Unit T58 Perth & Upper Whataroa Rivers (outstanding)

Unit T59 Poerua Rivers (outstanding)

Unit T60 Upper Wanganui River (outstanding)

Unit T66 Waitaha and Kakapotahi River Flats (high)??

Unit T67 Upper Waitaha River (outstanding)(part)

There are 34 parcels of stewardship land in the eleven modified braided river valleys in Te Wahi Pounamu Place:

- TWP36 Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area (188,711ha) 2804986 in 231 parcels
(not the main chunk, just the smaller parcels in riverbeds or on modified valley floor)
- TWP36 Paringa Bridge Conservation Area (102ha) 2804994 in 7 parcels
- TWP36 Mahitahi Riverbed Conservation Area (92ha) 2804993
- TWP34 Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area (1617ha) 2805318 in 6 parcels
- TWP34 Cook River/Weheka Flat Conservation Area (11ha) 2805319
- TWP32 Clearwater River Conservation Area (38ha) 2805317
- TWP35 Fox River Conservation Area (11.0542 ha) 2805320 in 3 parcels
- TWP33 Pekenga Drive Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2805321
- TWP33 Pekenga Drive Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2805322
- TWP28 Waiho Flat Conservation Area (108ha) 2805312
- TWP28 Waiho Flat Conservation Area (4ha) 2805312
- TWP27 Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha) 2805314 (one of two parcels)
- TWP28 Docherty Creek Conservation Area (18ha) 2805310
- TWP25 Docherty Creek Conservation Area (89ha) 2805277 in 2 parcels
- TWP25 Docherty Creek Conservation Area (Upper)(73ha) 2805278 in 5 parcels
- TWP25 Waiho River Conservation Area (1ha) 2805279
- TWP25 Waiho River Conservation Area (804ha) 2805304 in 3 parcels
- TWP25 Waiho River Conservation Area (193ha) 2805311 in 4 parcels
- TWP25 Waiho River Mouth Conservation Area (9ha) 2805306
- TWP25 Tartare Stream Conservation Area (20ha) 2805313 in 2 parcels
- TWP22 Upper Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (123ha) 2809663
- TWP21 Loan Block Road Conservation Area (91ha) 2809660
- TWP16 Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (39ha) 2805257
- TWP15 Waitangitāhuna River Mouth Conservation Area (277ha) 2805256 in 2 parcels
- TWP15 Roto Road Conservation Area (387ha) 2805651
- TWP18 Whataroa River Conservation Area (148ha) 2805645
- TWP18 Saltwater Forest Conservation Area (177ha) 2805650
- TWP18 Whataroa River Conservation Area (72ha) 2805653
- TWP18 Whataroa River Conservation Area (80ha) 2805658
- TWP18 Whataroa River Conservation Area (27ha) 2809664
- TWP19 McCulloughs Creek Conservation Area (0.1ha) 2809671 in 2 parcels
- TWP20 Purcell Road Conservation Area (22ha) 2805652 in 5 parcels

- TWP05 Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (53,835ha) 2809665
- TWP13 Poerua Riverbed Conservation Area (37ha) 2805649 in 2 parcels
- TWP13 Dry Creek Conservation Area (66ha) 2805656 in 3 parcels
- TWP13 Ferguson Creek Conservation Area (25ha) 2805655 in 2 parcels
- TWP10 Duart Creek Conservation Area (223ha) 2805648 in 9 parcels
- TWP09 Poerua River Mouth Conservation Area (531ha) 2805644 in 7 Parcels
- TWP06 Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area (1675ha) 2805637 in 2 parcels
- TWP08 La Fontaine Conservation Area (89ha) 2805638 in 7 parcels

Landscape factors for decision-makers to consider:

Paringa Flood Plain

- TWP36 **Paringa Bridge Conservation Area** (102ha) 2804994 in 7 parcels
This conservation area covers a section of the wide braided riverbed of the Paringa River both up and downstream of the Haast Highway SH6 bridge. It contains river channel, gravels, river terraces (which appear to be grazed) and some forested river escarpments. It is closely aligned with Paringa Bridge Scenic Reserve which in turn is contiguous with Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area. Paringa Bridge Conservation Area is also contiguous with Waituna Creek, Paringa Marginal Strip. A nearby salmon farm is excluded from the stewardship land parcel.

This conservation area is in high natural character *Unit T24 Paring River Flats*.

- TWP36 **Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area**(188,711ha) 2804986 in 231 parcels (two small parts)

Two small square outlying sections of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area are on the river flats at Paringa. One is forested, the other is grassland, both apparently unfenced and grazed as part of the surrounding farm.

An area at the river mouth of the Paringa River and braided river upstream in the hills are mapped as Outstanding Natural Landscape but neither of these stewardship parcels is included.

Mahitahi Flood Plain

- TWP36 **Mahitahi Riverbed Conservation Area** (92ha) 2804993
Mahitahi Riverbed Conservation Area protects a section of the braided riverbed of the Mahitahi River immediately upstream of a bend in the Haast Highway SH6 as it crosses the Mahitahi flats. It includes river gravels, channel and alluvial flats with grass and shrubland. Immediately upstream of this conservation area the riverbed is protected by the Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area. Mahitahi Marginal Strip helps to protect the south bank of the river and is contiguous along the south boundary of the parcel.

This parcel appears to be in both outstanding natural character *Unit T26 Lower Mahitahi River* and high natural character *Unit T28 Mahitahi River Flats*. Key

attributes/characteristics for the outstanding *Unit T26 Lower Mahitahi River* are:

Includes the unmodified western flank of the river defined by Mt Arthur and comprises extensive braided and singular river channels and mature forest.

The combination of unmodified landforms, continuous pristine vegetation cover, and a range of river typologies and aggregate size give this landscape a raw, wild and remote character.

Pristine mature beech forest cover.

Mix of aggregate sizes and weathered boulders that are constantly sifted and graded by the varying flows.

Contains a wide range of channel typologies (braids, pools, rapids, eddies).

Rugged and raw landforms and their dramatic profile give the river a sense of wildness.

Characteristic high rainfall events accentuate the drama and the sense of wildness.

Apart from the adjoining pastoral river flats this landscape is entirely devoid of development.

Unmodified and unconstrained riverbeds flanked by mature forest impart a strong sense of naturalness.

- **TWP36 Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area** (188,711ha) 2804986

Three riverbed parcels of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area help protect braided river values downstream toward Bruce Bay.

They are in high natural character *Unit T28 Mahitahi River Flats*. Key attributes/characteristics cited for this unit are:

Extensive braided river channel and gravel beds which cross a broad post glacial alluvial floor surrounded by pastoral farming, a small village, and mature forest.

Mix of aggregate sizes, their volume and the pronounced river beds give the impression of the rivers force during flood events and a distinct impression of the rivers wildness.

With broad views opening up along the river valley towards the Douglas Range the scale of the landscape is revealed.

Surrounding landforms and their dramatic profile give the river a sense of naturalness, Mt Arthur in particular.

The modified pasture adjoining the river does impact upon the sense of seclusion and remoteness, but on balance, does not detract from the integrity of the evident and expressive natural processes of the river bed itself nor the interaction of the river with the surrounding landforms and vegetation patterns.

A large portion of the river flats is also immediately flanked by mature swamp forest.

A wide range of channel typologies from meandering braids amongst gravel bed, to sections of rapids, pools and eddies where part of the river are confined to a single channel.

There are also four roadside parcels of remnant podocarp forest in Mahitahi Scenic Reserve in this modified valley.

Makawhio Flood Plain

- There are no stewardship parcels on the modified flats in Makawhio valley, only Jacobs River Marginal Strips.

Manakaiaua Flood Plain

- Only a small part of this floodplain is significantly modified, but none is included in an ONL.
- **WP36 Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area** (188,711ha) 2804986
Two tiny parcels of on flat in the modified area. One is a riparian sliver.

Karangarua Flood Plain

- TWP36 **Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area** (188,711ha) 2804986
Several parcels of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area occur on the modified flood plain, including a section of the riverbed between the SH6 bridge and The Sugar Loaf 160m, which has modified terraces either side.

Upstream of the bridge, as far as the confluence with Copeland River, the Karangarua riverbed is surrounded by Westland Tai Poutini National Park land and may be better managed as part of that. An extension up Rough River with national park either side reconnects with the larger part of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area but may be usefully added to the national park to reduce edge effects, particularly for the disconnected part on the north bank. Karangarua Bridge Scenic Reserve is contiguous with this small national park outlier. Both these upstream riverbeds are surrounded by hills and have relatively high natural character compared with the river as it passes under the bridge and crosses the modified plain.

Karangarua, Ohinetamatea and Havelock Creek Marginal Strips support the protection of water quality and freshwater ecological health on this plain.

Downstream of the modified valley floor the river passes through a high natural character part of Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area to reach the sea. All are part of the same conservation area.

This part is **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL11 Mahitahi/Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff**. Site type and values for this landscape are cited as:

Remote and isolated coastline comprising broad sandy beaches, coastal cliffs, bluffs, and craggy headlands backed by expansive low lying swampland, glacial shorn hills, and braided river mouths.

Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, windswept vegetation and isolated beach fronts impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea – sheer cliffs at Mahitahi, Makaawhio/Jacobs, Karangarua, and Cook Bluff plunge dramatically into the sea – Weheka/Cook and Karangarua River mouths are highly expressive of the landscape's natural processes.

High coastal exposure and orientation towards Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea.

Vast unmodified sequences of native forest enclosed by glacial shorn hills reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape. Mature wind swept rimu forest on Sandy Beach

Mahitahi/Bruce Bay was the landing place of Polynesian explorer Maui

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL11.

Weheka/Cook River Flood Plain

- TWP34 **Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area** (1617ha) 2805318 in 6 parcels

This is a riverbed/riparian conservation area covering much of the braided river system of lower Weheka (Cook River) as it crosses its alluvial plain to the sea at the base of Malcolm's Knob. There is a second smaller parcel upstream closer to Fox Glacier township.

It includes the full suite of braided river habitats including active river channels, bare

gravels, vegetated gravels, islands, banks, backwaters, terrace risers and on the south bank a significant area of unmodified alluvial river terrace with grassland, scattered totara and shrubland. Also on the south bank is a forested area indistinguishable from forest on the neighbouring Cook River/Weheka to Haast River Conservation Area which is contiguous along much of the south boundary.

Westland Tai Poutini National Park forms a northern boundary near the mouth. Meyer Swamp which is inside the national park is fed by the river and is an integral part of the Cook River/Weheka River system hydrologically and ecologically.

Clearwater Conservation Area (below), Cook River/Weheka Marginal Strip and Cook River/Weheka and Fox River Marginal Strips are all contiguous at various places.

Part of this conservation area, at the mouth of Weheka/Cook River is in Outstanding Natural Landscape *ONL11 Mahitahi/ Bruce Bay to Cook Bluff*. Stated site type and values for this ONL are:

Remote and isolated coastline comprising broad sandy beaches, coastal cliffs, bluffs, and craggy headlands backed by expansive low lying swampland, glacial shorn hills, and braided river mouths.

Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, windswept vegetation and isolated beach fronts impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea – sheer cliffs at Mahitahi, Makawhio/Jacobs, Karangarua, and Cook Bluff plunge dramatically into the sea – Weheka/Cook & Karangarua River mouths are highly expressive of the landscapes natural processes.

High coastal exposure and orientation towards Te Tai-o-Rēhua/ the Tasman Sea.

Vast unmodified sequences of native forest enclosed by glacial shorn hills reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape. Mature wind swept rimu forest on Sandy Beach

Mahitahi/Bruce Bay was the landing place of Polynesian explorer Maui.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL11.

The more modified parts of Weheka/Cook River and Fox River are both included in a Y-shaped high natural character *Unit T44 Cook and Fox River Flats*.

Closer to the river mouth, where the river effectively divides in two around the Meyer Swamp, it is assessed as having outstanding natural character in *Unit T41 Lower Cook & Clearwater Rivers*, and at the coast the river mouths are in outstanding coastal natural character *Unit C22 Hunts Beach-Karangarua & Cook River Mouths*.

- TWP34 **Cook River/Weheka Flat Conservation Area** (11ha) 2805319 is a small parcel of river terrace land not connected to but very close to the Cook River/Weheka Conservation Area above, on the unmodified river terraces on the south bank. It includes a vegetated island, bare river gravels, a backwater and terrace with grey shrubland.

- TWP32 **Clearwater River Conservation Area** (38ha) 2805317 is a long riparian conservation area following the Clearwater River as it meanders across the Weheka flood plain to the big river. Clearwater River has its source some distance away on Mt Mitchell 1623m in Westland Tai Poutini National Park. It winds around the north edge of the Weheka floodplain at the edge of the national park, passing Lake Matheson, before crossing the modified plain to reach the wide braided river bed of Weheka. The stewardship land is not always aligned with the course of the river, especially further downstream. It is possible parts of the river have been “straightened”. Clearwater River Conservation Area is not fenced and is managed as part of surrounding farmland.
- TWP35 **Fox River Conservation Area** (11.0542 ha) 2805320 is made up of 3 parcels either side the Haast Highway SH6 as it crosses the Fox River. Westland Tai Poutini National Park land is contiguous along the north boundary. It includes part of the access road to Fox Glacier (currently closed) and another road lay-by but most is shrubland and rough pasture with some regenerating forest on the river escarpment. The conservation area includes a small part of the river bed.

It is a highly visible site at a sensitive location near the entrance to the national park. The rest of the Fox River bed at this location is not PCL even though there is national park either side. Even though the vegetation at this site has been disturbed and modified it is regenerating. Natural character will increase with time. Consideration could be given to adding Fox River Conservation Area to the adjacent national park.

It is in high natural character *Unit T44 Fox River*.

- TWP33 **Pekenga Drive Conservation Area** (0.1ha) 2805321 is a section in Fox Glacier settlement with a DOC staff house and garden.
- TWP33 **Pekenga Drive Conservation Area** (0.1ha) 2805322 is a section in Fox Glacier settlement with a DOC staff house and garden.
- **Rural Section 4156 Conservation Area** is in the Fox Glacier settlement.
- **Lot 4 DP 1260 Conservation Area** is in the Fox Glacier settlement.

Waiho Flood Plain

- TWP28 **Docherty Creek Conservation Area** (18ha) 2805310 is a parcel of lowland alluvial forest adjacent to SH6 and contiguous with Westland Tai Poutini National Park. It is ecologically and visually indistinguishable from the adjacent national park and consideration could be given to adding it to the park.
- TWP28 **Waiho Flat Conservation Area** (108ha) 2805312 in 6 parcels is a group of stewardship parcels along both sides of the Haast Highway SH6 close to Canavans Knob and the Waiho River. Canavans Knob is an outlying landmark part of Westland Tai Poutini National Park. All parcels contain lowland valley floor forest. The largest L-shaped parcel on a bend in the road has Westland Tai Poutini National Park land along its south boundary and together all are important as an ecological and visual link between Canavans Knob and the rest of the national park. Consideration could be given to including all these parcels into the national park.

Part of this parcel is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL14 Aoraki/Mt Cook**. Site type and values for this landscape are:

Extensive landscape consisting of dramatic mountain ranges that extend westward from the main divide, high altitude peaks, glaciers, permanent snowfields, and incised valley systems.

Interplay of mature indigenous forest and vegetative sequence from lowland beech forest through to alpine scrub communities reinforcing topography and pronounced relief – particularly where horizontal vegetation patterns including seral beech forest and scrub mark glacial retreat.

Exposed peaks and ridge tops revealing underlying geology are highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes. Dramatic etched bluffs are highly expressive of formative glacial processes.

Combination of etched ridge lines, rocky outcrops, expansive permanent ice flows, glacial lakes, vegetation sequences giving way to raw and exposed peaks and ridges are highly natural.

Te Moenga-o-Tuawe/ Fox Glacier & Ngā Roimata-a-Hinehukatere/Franz Josef Glacier, Douglas Neve, Mt Tasman, Sefton, Elie De Beaumont, Hicks, & Aoraki are key / representative landmarks within this landscape.

- TWP28 **Waiho Flat Conservation Area** (4ha) 2805312 is another parcel in the group above adjacent to SH6 with lowland alluvial forest.

- TWP27 **Waiho Gorge Conservation Area** (36ha) 2805314 (part)

This conservation area is in two parts, one on the hill and one on the flat. This part is on the flat in and around the settlement of Franz Joseph. It has regenerating forest which contributes to the “national park” feel of the settlement and provides screening between different built-up parts of the settlement. Graham Scenic Reserve is across the road. Although physically separated, the natural character of the forest remnant links visually and ecologically to the nearby national park.

- TWP25 **Upper Docherty Creek Conservation Area** (73ha) 2805278 Docherty Creek is another small braided river converging with the Waiho on this flood plain. Its source is in Westland Tai Poutini National Park just below Lemmer Peak 1775m and Tower Saddle.

This conservation area is in five parcels spread out along Docherty Creek which flows along the south bank of the Waiho. It is not completely aligned with the course of the river and includes some of Docherty Creek Road. Includes bare gravels, islands and some terrace land where the vegetation is somewhat modified. The channels appear to be ephemeral with the riverbed dry much of the time. Some land has been cleared of vegetation for access to the riverbed, perhaps for gravel extraction. Land either side of the conservation area is farmed, some cultivated.

Docherty Creek-Neils Creek Marginal Strip at the downstream end connects this conservation area with Docherty Creek Conservation Area (see below) and a parcel of Waiho River Conservation Area further downstream.

- TWP25 **Docherty Creek Conservation Area** (89ha) 2805277 covers the downstream section of Docherty Creek, a smaller braided river which flows down the south side of the Waiho flood plain before converging with the Waiho River itself near the mouth. It is cut in two by legal road. Although the braided river bed is quite wide the surface channel seems to be ephemeral, with standing water only in upstream locations but with flowing channels further down. It is quite close to a forested part of Westland Tai Poutini National Park and is linked to the national park by Docherty Creek-Neils Creek Marginal Strip at either end. Vegetation patterns are typical of braided river systems but the species may not be entirely indigenous. There are vehicle tracks in several places, and it is likely the

riverbed is used for access. Alluvial terraces either side of the conservation area are farmed and there appears to be some incursion into the conservation land including limited cultivation.

- TWP25 **Waiho River Conservation Area** (804ha) 2805304 in 3 parcels includes the whole length of the braided Waiho River bed and the bed of Tartare Stream from the SH6 bridge at Tartare down to the sea. Waiho Glacial Coast Marine Reserve is adjacent offshore and extends some way up the river overlaying the stewardship land.

The conservation area contains the full range of braided riverbed habitats including islands, active channels, bare gravels, banks, backwaters, and unmodified terraces with natural vegetation patterns and high natural character, particularly downstream.

The conservation area is in two sections above and below a natural barrier across the riverbed which is forested and part of the Westland Tai Poutini National Park. The upstream Tartare Stream section narrows as it passes between the constraining landforms before joining a very wide lower section of the braided river with the main Waiho River channel. The Tartare Stream channel is actively eroding a farmed terrace just downstream of the quarry on the north bank but this is outside the boundary of the conservation area.

Waiho River Marginal Strip is contiguous downstream on its south side. Not all the braided river system is included within the conservation area boundaries.

The lower braided river and river mouth of the Waiho are included in Outstanding Natural Landscape *ONL15 Koihahai/ Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff*. Stated site type and values for this landscape are:

Series of steep craggy headlands and isolated sandy beaches backed by glacial shorn foothills covered in native forest which contain a number of lake and swamp basins.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/the Tasman Sea with its sheer cliffs and scarps, continuous coastal and lowland forest cover providing a consistent patterning to this exposed landscape.

Combination of glacial sculpted terrain with continuous vegetation cover, moderate relief, and the tranquillity of the lakes opening up views up and down the valley basins reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Unmodified vegetation sequences from dune fields to mature coastal forest.

Māpouriki/Lake Mapourika, Wahapo, Matheson, Three & Five Mile Lagoons, and Ōmoeroa Range are key landmarks within this unit.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL15.

Most of the riverbed from just inside the river mouth up to where the Waiho enters the hills is a high natural character landscape *Unit T47 Waiho River Flats*. Key attributes/characteristics for this landscape are:

Section of a very large braided river channel and gravel beds surrounded by pasture, farming activities, and stands of mature swamp forest.

Mix of aggregate sizes, their volume and the pronounced river beds give the impression of the rivers force during flood events and a distinct impression of the rivers wildness.

The modified pasture adjoining the river does impact upon the sense of seclusion and remoteness, but on balance, does not detract from the integrity of the evident and expressive natural processes of the river bed itself nor the interaction of the river with the surrounding landforms and vegetation patterns.

Dynamic natural processes associated with the meandering braids and gravel beds, grading of aggregate sizes, downcutting, river terracing, flood events and inundation.

Flanked in parts by stands of mature native forest and swampland to the north and pasture to the south.

- TWP25 **Waiho River Conservation Area** (1ha) 2805279 is a small area of braided riverbed, contiguous with the larger parcel above near the quarry on the north bank near Tatare. It is indistinguishable from the neighbouring parcel above. It is in high natural character landscape *Unit T47 Waiho River Flats*.
- TWP25 **Waiho River Conservation Area** (193ha) 2805311 in 4 parcels includes another large part of the Waiho braided riverbed from the SH6 bridge near Franz Joseph settlement down to the forested landform with a Westland Tai Poutini National Park outlier on it and which forms a natural barrier across the river system.

It is also contiguous with the outlying Canavans Knob part of Westland Tai Poutini National Park and the neighbouring cluster of Waiho Flat Conservation Area, with Waiho River-Canavans Knob Marginal Strip sandwiched between them.

Another marginal strip, Waiho River-Franz Joseph/Waiiau Marginal Strip, lies alongside the uppermost parcel of this conservation area close to the bridge. The State Highway is adjacent to Westland Tai Poutini National Park at this location and land on both sides of the river upstream of the bridge is national park.

One part of Waiho River-Gibbs Road Marginal Strip is contiguous at the downstream end with another part nearby. The conservation area currently includes large areas of bare gravels, active river channel, and islands, some which have remnant forest on them. There are vehicle tracks on riverbanks and old islands close to the south side of the river. The Franz Joseph wastewater treatment plant and oxidation ponds are adjacent on the north bank with an active channel nearby.

This parcel is in high natural character landscape *Unit T47 Waiho River Flats*.

- TWP25 **Waiho River Mouth Conservation Area** (9ha) 2805306 is a rectangular parcel next to Waiho River Conservation Area above, at the mouth of the river. It has a mosaic of wetland, shrubland and forest at various stages on upper and lower terraces. Its southern boundary abuts Westland National Park and the northern Boundary is shared with the biggest parcel of Waiho River Conservation Area, giving good connectivity.

This parcel is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL15 Koihaihai/ Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff*. (see details above)

It is also in outstanding natural character *Unit C23 Gillespies Point-Kohuamarua Point*.

- TWP25 **Tartare Stream Conservation Area** (20ha) 2805313 is upstream of the SH6 bridge over Tartare Stream. A number of vegetated islands are a feature of the section of this braided river but current vegetation is unlikely to be indigenous. There are active channels and bare gravels as well. Terrace land to the south appears more natural in character. Waitangi Forest Conservation Area is close to the upstream end so the parcel could be managed to support natural re-vegetation in the future. A cycleway runs through the conservation area near its north boundary.

- The Waiho floodplain is a naturally complicated landscape. Different classifications of conservation lands in disconnected arrangements possibly reflect this. The various parcels of stewardship land here present an opportunity to significantly improve ecological linkages, enhance ki uta ki tai connectedness overall, strengthen resilience in a dynamic environment and add to the diversity of ecosystem types and overall indigenous biodiversity of the Westland Tai Poutini National Park.

Westland Tai Poutini National Park contains a variety of landscape and ecosystem types but not a full braided river system ki uta ki tai.

- The operative Westland Tai Poutini National Park Management Plan 2001-2011 includes some guidance in section 4.5.1 Boundaries and Land Additions (pp122-123):

The policy 4.5.1(b) is to “Recognise that other lands adjoining the park are of high conservation value and could be suitable national park additions” with the following explanation:

“Additions...must contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems or natural features so beautiful, unique or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest”. The list of areas identified for inclusion include:

Kahikatea forest remnants adjoining the Waiho River flats

The matai/totara forest to the south of Canavans Knob near Franz Josef Waiiau.

A review of the management plan is currently underway and a new management plan has been drafted but the draft does not seem to include any content about park additions.

Waitangitāhuna and Whataroa Flood Plains

- **TWP22 Upper Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area** (123.3091 ha) 280966

Waitangitāhuna River has its source at the main divide just below Mt Downe 2002m. This parcel is located where the river emerges from the hills to cross a modified floodplain. It is an elongated riparian conservation area beginning at the confluence with Darnley Creek and running down to the SH6 bridge. It is not particularly well aligned with the current channel of the river itself but includes a significant area of river terrace and a length of tributary. Forested Waitangitāhuna Scenic Reserve on the other side of the river also includes some river bed.

A road formed to provide access to an enclave of non-PCL land upstream crosses the middle of the terrace and stewardship land either side of the road is fenced and grazed. Grey shrubland has been cleared in at least one paddock although some survives on other parts of the flats. A considerable length of Gaunt Creek Marginal Strip winds around the edges of river terraces in the vicinity.

This conservation area is located in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15** *Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff*. (see details as above).

It is located in outstanding natural character *Unit T55 Upper Waitangitāhuna River*. Key Attributes/characteristics cited are:

Broad open valley comprising expansive braided river channels, eroded escarpments, gravel beds, bluffs, and water falls, and flanked by forested mountain ranges.

Dramatically eroded landforms clearly express the rivers power and varying flow. Broken vegetation and expansive depositional landforms reinforce these qualities.
Evidence of erosion revealing underlying geology, rockfall, stream downcutting and flooding.
The River contains a range of aggregate sizes and weathered boulders that are constantly sifted and graded by the varying flows.
Pristine mature beech* forest cover.
Contains a wide range of channel typologies (braids, pools, rapids, eddies).
Rugged bluff and gorge features and their dramatic profile give the river a sense of wildness.
Characteristic high rainfall events accentuate the drama and the sense of wildness.
Entirely devoid of development / modification.
(*note: unlikely to be beech forest at this location)

- **TWP21 Loan Block Road Conservation Area** (91ha) 2809660

During a flood in 1967 Waitangitāhuna River changed course and began to flow into Lake Wahapo. Now the Waitangitāhuna braided river bed ends abruptly at Lake Wahapo and the lake is slowly filling up with sediment.

Loan Block Road Conservation Area occupies a hydrologically dynamic section of the Waitangitāhuna braided river bed just upstream of Lake Wahapo on the boundary of Westland Tai Poutini National Park. It covers active channel, bare gravel and vegetated islands and terraces with grey shrubland. There is cultivated farmland hard up against its southern boundary. A 4WD access track passes across it into the national park.

This stewardship land is located on the cusp between outstanding natural character *Unit T52 Okarito River-Lake Mapourika & Wahapo* and high natural character *Unit T54 Waiangitaona River Flats*.

- **TWP20 Purcell Road Conservation Area** (22ha) 2805652

Purcell Road is a riparian conservation area which runs around the toe of a granite slope at the edge of Westland Tai Poutini National Park at the foot of Mt Bird. It seems to follow a stream formed by water surfacing from the re-routed Waitangitāhuna River and channelled into Graham Creek. Below the confluence of Matainui Creek, at the end of Purcell Road, Graham Creek becomes Waitangitāhuna River. Both Matainui and Graham Creeks have marginal strips. Purcell Road Conservation Area includes a number of smaller fragments in what appears to be the original Waitangitāhuna river bed. Downstream of Gunn Road Purcell Road Conservation Area ends and Waitangitāhuna River diverges from Granite Hill and meanders out through the floodplain accompanied by quite a number of Waitangitāhuna Marginal Strip and Lower Waitangitāhuna Marginal Strip parcels to eventually meet another Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (see below). Purcell Road Conservation Area is not far from Ballyhoolie Scenic Reserve.

This conservation area is aligned along the boundary of Outstanding Natural Landscape *ONL 16 Ōkārīto Lagoon to Mt Bird* which extends right down to the toe of the slope and beyond in one place, so at least part of Purcell Road Conservation Area may be within. Site type and values for this ONL are:

Vast and remote lagoon systems enclosed by extensive beaches and dune fields and flanked by mature low lying coastal forest which extends inland to Mt Bird across a broad gentle inclined glacial terrace.

Unmodified sequences of dune field and wetland vegetation through to mature coastal forest.

Highly dynamic and dramatic interaction/relationship between the Ōkārīto River mouth, associated sand bars and the open waters of the Tasman Sea.

Enclosure of the lagoon is expressive of formative coastal processes.

Combination of the enclosing terrain, continuous and vast expanse of vegetation cover, the tranquillity of the Lagoons expansive open waters opening up views up and down the coast reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Ōkārito is a key landmark within this landscape.

Purcell Road Conservation Area is in outstanding natural character *Unit T56 Waitangitaona and Whataroa River* which wraps around the edge of the moraine landform.

- TWP16 **Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area** (39ha) 2805257
This is a riparian parcel loosely associated with the serpentine course of the lower Waitangitāhuna River located between Waitangirotto Nature Reserve and Waitangitāhuna River Mouth Conservation Area. Land around the river is modified for farming and because the conservation area does not follow the river much of it includes farmland rather than river ecosystems. At its upstream end it is very close to Roto Road Conservation Area.
- TWP15 **Roto Road Conservation Area** (387ha) 2805651
Roto Road Conservation Area lies between two parts of Waitangirotto Nature Reserve with Westland Tai Poutini National Park on its south west boundary. It includes extensive wetland which still shows evidence of previous attempts to drain it. The landscape is very similar to the adjacent nature reserves although possibly more modified/disturbed. Hydrologically it is linked with the Waitangirotto River which has a white heron colony near its hapua and river mouth.
- TWP15 **Waitangitāhuna River Mouth Conservation Area** (277ha) 2805256
This conservation area is in 2 parcels is on the coast between Waitangitāhuna and Whataroa Rivers as they meet the sea. There are whitebait baches along the lower section of Waitangitāhuna River. The conservation area contains a mix of different vegetation types including wetland, shrubland and forest.

This conservation area is **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers**. Site type and values for this ONL are:

Expansive braided river channels flanked by a series of steep and dramatic river escarpments covered in indigenous forest.

Highly dynamic and dramatic interaction / relationship between the river mouths, associated sand bars and the open waters of the Tasman Sea.

Assemblage of river escarpments of similar orientation, altitude, vegetative cover and appearance – the dramatic profile of the escarpment features accentuate this landscapes endemic character.

Unmodified sequences of dune field and wetland vegetation through to mature coastal and low land native forest. Dynamic natural processes associated with the meandering braids and gravel beds, grading of aggregate sizes, downcutting, river terracing, flood events and inundation.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL17.

- TWP18 **Whataroa River Conservation Area** (148ha) 2805645
This is a braided river parcel in the lower Whataroa River bed on the north bank. At its downstream end it is connected to the Saltwater Ecological Area and is close to Saltwater

Forest Conservation Area. Most of it is vegetated river terrace with lagoons in former river channels and natural vegetation patterns of grassland, shrubland and forest. Some active river channels and bare gravels associated with the current course of the braided river are also included. Natural character is high. Whataroa Marginal Strip is upstream.

It is included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Puerua-tāhuna/Puerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers** (see details above).

- TWP18 **Whataroa River Conservation Area** (72ha) 2805653

This is a long river bed strip aligned with Whataroa River on its south bank. It is unusually well aligned with the current river bed and mostly includes active channel and bare gravels. There is a small area of vegetated terrace at the downstream end where it connects with Mumu Creek Wetland Wildlife Management Reserve.

It is included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Puerua-tāhuna/Puerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers** (see details above).

- TWP18 **Saltwater Forest Conservation Area** (177ha) 2805650

This is a braided river bed parcel at the confluence of Rotokino and Whataroa Rivers. Rotokino Wildlife Management Reserve, Rotokino Scenic Reserve and White Heron Lagoon Wildlife Management Reserve are all contiguous. Whataroa Marginal Strip lies along its entire eastern boundary with The Exile Scenic Reserve adjacent. All the braided river bed habitats are within the conservation area: bare gravels, active channel, islands, backwaters and terraces. Vegetation patterns appear natural although there may be an exotic component.

- TWP18 **Whataroa River Conservation Area** (80ha) 2805658 is a braided riverbed conservation area which mainly includes vegetated lower river terrace. The vegetation patterns seem natural. Whataroa Marginal Strip runs along the entire eastern boundary with other bits around about. Cultivated farmland adjacent on the upper terrace encroaches into the stewardship land in one location. Little gravel or active channel currently.

At least part is included in outstanding natural character *Unit T56 Waitangitaona & Whataroa River*.

- TWP18 **Whataroa River Conservation Area** (27ha) 2809664 is a riverbed parcel in the Whataroa River as it emerges from the hills onto the Whataroa floodplain, just downstream of the SH6 Bridge. Most of it covers a large vegetated island in a sweeping bend in the river. Vegetation appears natural. Surrounding terraces are modified for farming. The conservation area is connected to some random fragments of Whataroa Scenic Reserve and Whataroa Marginal Strip.
- TWP19 **McCulloughs Creek Conservation Area** (0.1ha) 2809671 is made up of two tiny parcels embedded in twin marginal strips which follow stop banks intended to control McCulloch Creek as it flows from the steep hills upstream. The parcels are close to SH6 and are apparently related to a transmission line, perhaps sites for pylons.

Poerua River

- TWP05 **Waitangi Forest Conservation Area** (53,835ha) 2809665

A small angular part of the massive Waitangi Forest Conservation Area extends to cover braided river bed in the upper Poerua River, linked with Poerua Marginal Strip which in turn links with Poerua Riverbed Conservation Area (see below).

It is in high natural character *Unit T62 Poerua River Flats*.

- TWP 13 **Poerua Riverbed Conservation Area** (37ha) 2805649 in 2 parcels.

This is a braided river bed conservation area immediately downstream of the Whataroa Highway SH6 bridge over Poerua River. The river bed is wide here. Its boundary is well aligned with the northern riverbank but the conservation area does not extend all the way across to the south bank. Most of the current mainstem is outside the conservation area which mainly includes bare gravels with just two vegetated islands.

It is in high natural character *Unit T62 Poerua River Flats*.

- TWP13 **Dry Creek Conservation Area** (66ha)2805656 in 3 parcels

This is a river bed conservation area covering a length of Dry Creek as it emerges from the hills and Waitangi Forest Conservation Area. Dry Creek Marginal strip aligned along its north boundary. Also includes a section of the Poerua braided riverbed contiguous with Waitangi Forest Conservation Area.

It appears to be right on cusp between high natural character *Unit T62 Poerua River Flats* and outstanding natural character *Unit T59 Poerua Rivers*.

- TWP13 **Ferguson Creek Conservation Area** (25ha) 2805655 in 2 parcels covers the river bed of braided Ferguson Creek as it emerges from the hills and Waitangi Forest Conservation Area.
- TWP10 **Duart Farm Conservation Area** (223ha) 2805648 in 9 parcels

Two groups of Duart Farm Conservation Area parcels extend out into the flood plain to form a natural character gateway between modified Poerua River valley and Whataroa flats. They are linked to adjacent natural character PCL hill country but otherwise surrounded by highly developed farmland. Remnant and regenerating lowland forest, shrubland and wetland are included in both groupings, with wetland showing signs of earlier drainage attempts in places.

The northern portal is contiguous with Wanganui Forest Conservation Area and Minehan Scenic Reserve on an adjacent moraine wall, separated only by Petersen Road. Oneone Road passes through one block to intersect with Petersen Road.

Duart Farm Conservation Area also includes two outlying parcels of regenerating forest which provide ecological stepping stones across the modified plain to the Poerua braided riverbed and beyond. Blowhole Creek flows through to meet La Fontaine Creek at the base of the slope. This grouping also includes a block of Local Purpose Reserve, Harihari Native Bush Preservation.

The southern portal grouping is contiguous with Poerua River Scenic Reserve which in

turn is connected to Wilberg Range Scenic Reserve, Ferguson Creek Conservation Area (hill parcel) and Waitangi Forest Conservation Area. La Fontaine Creek, with twin marginal strips, forms a lovely natural boundary to the east. This group also includes a block of Harihari Native Bush Preservation Local Purpose Reserve. La Fontaine and Flax Creek connect the natural character grouping with well aligned twin marginal strips as far as the Petersen Road bridge.

This southern part of Duart Farm Conservation Area is included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** at the northern edge of *ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers* (see details above).

The two Duart Farm Conservation Area parcels of stewardship land and associated PCL are an excellent example of how retaining and enhancing areas of original natural character landscape can add visual and ecological value to modified valley floor landscapes.

- **TWP09 Poerua River Mouth Conservation Area** (531ha) 2805644 in 7 Parcels

Half of this is a riverbed conservation area and the other part includes coastal swampland along Hikimutu Lagoon to Saltwater Lagoon. The riverbed part covers nearly all the braided river system of the lower Poerua downstream from the Big Creek confluence. At the upstream end Oneone Road forms the boundary so the conservation area includes some riverbank forest similar to Lower Poerua Ecological Area across the road. Active channel, braids, bare gravel, islands and terraces are included. All appear to have a high degree of naturalness although broom may have colonised some islands and margins. Lengths of Poerua Marginal Strip are also associated with this part of the river although none are directly connected.

The conservation area is included in two **Outstanding Natural Landscapes** *ONL17* and *ONL19 Poerua hāpua/Saltwater Lagoon*. Stated site type and values for *ONL19* are:

Vast and remote lagoon system enclosed by extensive beaches, dune fields and flanked by mature low lying coastal forest which extends inland across a broad elevated terrace.

Unmodified sequences of dune field and wetland vegetation through to mature coastal forest.

Highly dynamic and dramatic interaction/relationship between the Lagoon mouth, associated sand bars and the open waters of the Tasman Sea.

Enclosure of the lagoon is expressive of formative coastal processes.

Combination of the enclosing terrain, continuous and vast expanse of vegetation cover, the tranquillity of the Lagoons expansive open waters and islands reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape. Pouerua hāpua/ Saltwater Lagoon is a key landmark within this landscape.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as *ONL19*.

There are baches on the banks close to the river mouth. Near the outlet the river passes between Wanganui Forest Conservation Area and Saltwater Ecological Area to flow directly into the Tasman Sea.

The Poerua River is considered to have high natural character and the river bed part of this conservation area is included in *Unit T62 Poerua River Flats* which extends right up into the hills. At the river mouth and along the coast this conservation area has outstanding natural character, and is included in *Unit C27 Saltwater Lagoon*.

Wanganui Flood Plain

- TWP06 **Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area** (1,675ha) 2805637 in 2 parcels.

Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area is a huge area of braided river which runs from the SH6 bridge down to the sea. It includes active channel, backwaters, springs, bare gravels, alluvial terraces, and islands including some which are forested. Away from the bridge vegetation appears to be largely natural. Flood protection works in the conservation area intended to protect developed terraces from natural braided river processes undermine what is otherwise high natural character on a grand scale.

Upstream of the bridge the braided riverbed is protected in Waitaha Forest Conservation Area although terraces are modified by cattle grazing. The riparian protection function of the riverbed conservation land is supported by multiple parcels of Wanganui River Marginal Strip along its length.

Parts of Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area are included in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers.*

Most of the Wanganui River Bed Conservation Area is in high natural character *Unit T65 Wanganui River Flats* as it crosses the modified Harihari flood plain, but near the river mouth the landscape is assessed as outstanding in *Unit T63 Little Wanganui River*. An enclave of high natural character *C29 Wanganui River Mouth* presumably reflects the number of white baiting baches in the vicinity.

- TWP08 **La Fontaine Conservation Area** (89ha) 2805638 in 7 parcels(10ha) 2805587
La Fontaine Stream is not actually connected with this stewardship parcel which is a remnant forest and wetland area adjacent to Wanganui Forest Conservation Area with Oneone Ecological Area on its northern boundary. It straddles La Fontaine Road. Two outlying parcels provide ecological stepping stones to nearby Wanganui Riverbed Conservation Area. Modified farmland abuts on all other boundaries.

For **Waitaha Flood Plain** see Braided Riverbeds chapter in Hokitika Place.

Te Wahi Pounamu Lowlands

Coastal and lowland areas of Te Wahi Pounamu Place between Weheka/Cook River and Waitaha River, but not including modified braided river floodplains, which are included in Braided River Valleys chapter.

Many areas are characterised by slow drainage. Various types of swamp, swamp forest, etc. Granite outcrops and other landforms provide some relief.

Generally seaward of SH6.

Most modification along the coast, and in places around the edges, but natural character predominates within large areas of PCL.

All of Te Wahi Pounamu Place is governed by Westland District Council. This is one of the three territorial authorities working together on [Te Taio Poutini \(draft\) Plan](#).

Some lowland parts of the Te Wahi Pounamu Place are identified as Outstanding Natural Landscape in schedule 5 of [Te Taio Poutini \(draft\) plan](#):

ONL15 Koihahai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff

ONL16 Okarito Lagoon to Mt Bird

ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Poerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers

ONL19 Pouerua hāpua/Saltwater Lagoon

ONL20 Wakanui/Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River

ONL21 Matahi/Lake Ianthe

In the [West Coast Region Natural Character Study \(Brown 2013\)](#) twelve units in lowland Te Wahi Pounamu Place are assessed as having high or outstanding natural character. These include:

Unit T46 Waikupakupa & Omoeroa Rivers

Unit T48 Waiho River Escarpment (outstanding)

Unit T51 Alpine Lake/Ata Puai (outstanding)

Unit T52 Ōkārīto River-Lake Mapourika and Wahapo (outstanding)

Unit T56 Waitangitaona & Whataroa River (outstanding)

Unit T57 Whataroa River Flats (high)

Unit T61 Hinatua River (outstanding)

Unit T62 Poerua River Flats (high)

Unit T63 Little Wanganui River (outstanding)

Unit T64 Lake Ianthe/Matahi

Unit T66 Waitaha & Kakapotahi River Flats

Unit T67 Upper Waitaha River (part, on south bank)

Seven high and outstanding natural character coastal units are also identified:

Unit C23 Gillespies Point-Kohumarua Point (outstanding)

Unit C24 Gillespies Beach (high)

Unit C25 Ōkārīto Lagoon (outstanding)

Unit C26 Waitangitaona & Whataroa River Mouth (outstanding)

Unit C27 Saltwater Lagoon (outstanding)

Unit C28 Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River (outstanding)

Unit C29 Wanganui River Mouth (high)

There are about twenty parcels of stewardship land in this part of the place:

TWP31 Gillespies Beach Conservation Area (112ha) 2805316 in 2 parcels
TWP29 Waikupakupa River Conservation Area (70ha) 2805308
TWP29 Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area (34ha) 2805307
TWP30 Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area (1ha) 2805309
TWP27 Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha) 2805314 (part on flat)? Is is Braided river?
TWP26 Waiho River Conservation Area (hill) (137ha) 2805305 in 2 parcels
TWP05 Wahapo Conservation Area (114ha) 2805301 in 2 parcels
TWP05 Ōkārito Forks Conservation Area (88ha) 2805302 in 2 parcels
TWP24 Ōkārito Conservation Area (11ha) 2805258
TWP24 Ōkārito Township Conservation Area (11ha) 2805297 in 184 parcels
TWP14 Abut Head Conservation Area (63ha) 2805255 in 3 parcels
TWP17 Saltwater Forest Conservation Area (28ha) 2805646 in 2 parcels
TWP12 Duart Creek Conservation Area (129ha) 2805647 in 3 parcels
TWP08 Wanganui Forest Conservation Area (649ha) 2805639 in 10 parcels
TWP08 La Fontaine Stream Conservation Area (10ha) 2805587
TWP08 Petersen Road Conservation Area (48ha) 2805593
TWP03 Ianthe Forest Conservation Area (1,404ha) 2805636 in 5 parcels
TWP03 Waitaha River Mouth Conservation Area (3ha) 2805515
TWP03 Ounatai Lagoon Conservation Area (48ha) 2805516
TWP04 Duffers Creek Conservation Area Ianthe(287ha)2809717
TWP02 Duffers Creek Conservation Area Pukekura (0.3ha) 2809701 in 2 parcels
HOK51 Pukekura Conservation Area (0.5ha) 2805640
TWP01 Kākāpotahi Conservation Area (3ha)2805519

Landscape factors for decision-makers to consider:

- TWP31 **Gillespies Beach Conservation Area** (112ha) 2805316 in 2 parcels

Gillespies Beach Conservation Area is surrounded by Westland Tai Poutini National Park land. Includes gravel beach, dunes, dune slack lagoons wetland coastal shrublands, and some forest. It is a buffer for the larger lagoon inland, within the national park. It also includes a car park and camping area for visitors. Vehicle tracks run along most of the length of the conservation area. Consideration could be given to including it with adjacent national park.

This conservation area is in High Natural Character *Unit C24 Gillespies Beach*.

- TWP29 **Waikupakupa River Conservation Area** (70ha) 2805308

Waikupakupa River is a small braided river which has its origins at the main divide. It is largely unmodified ki uta ki tai, passing through PCL for its whole length. The stewardship parcels cover the lower reaches of the river. They are surrounded by Westland Tai Poutini

National Park land. Consideration could be given to including this parcel in the national park. Inaccessible by vehicle except along the beach.

Waikupakupa River Conservation Area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 *Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff***. Site type and values for this landscape are described as:

Series of steep craggy headlands and isolated sandy beaches backed by glacial shorn foothills covered in native forest which contain a number of lake and swamp basins.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/ the Tasman Sea with its sheer cliffs and scarps, continuous coastal and lowland forest cover providing a consistent patterning to this exposed landscape.

Combination of glacial sculpted terrain with continuous vegetation cover, moderate relief, and the tranquillity of the lakes opening up views up and down the valley basins reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Unmodified vegetation sequences from dune fields to mature coastal forest.

Māpouriki/Lake Mapourika, Wahapo, Matheson, Three & Five Mile Lagoons, and Ōmoeroa Range are key landmarks within this unit

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL15.

It is also in outstanding natural character *Unit T46 Waikupakupa & Omoeroa Rivers*.

- TWP29 **Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area** (34ha) 2805307 is similar to Waikupakupa Conservation Area above. It is a smaller braided river with origins in the mountains, which passes through PCL for practically its whole length. Relatively inaccessible. High natural character landscape. Consideration could be given to including this one in the national park as well.

This conservation area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 *Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff***

It is also in outstanding natural character *Unit T46 Waikupakupa & Omoeroa Rivers*.

- TWP30 **Ōmoeroa River Conservation Area** (1ha) 2805309 is in two parts at a bend in the Fox Glacier Highway SH6. One a small area of Ōmoeroa riverbed under the bridge and the other is mostly sealed roadway but includes some vegetation either side. All is surrounded by Westland Te Tai Poutini National Park with some legal road.

This conservation area is also in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 *Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff***.

It is also in outstanding natural character *Unit T46 Waikupakupa & Omoeroa Rivers*.

- TWP27 **Waiho River Conservation Area** (hill) (137ha) 2805305

This is an angular and irregularly shaped conservation area with Westland Tai Poutini National Park on many of its boundaries. It is located on a glaciated landform rising to 448m south of Lake Mapourika. Some level land on top of the landform is included. Two unnamed streams flow down the escarpment then disappear underground into the valley floor. The conservation area partially encircles Lake Pratt on one boundary and includes another small unnamed water body.

Modified valley floor abuts the conservation area where a shaft of cultivated land associated with a meandering stream penetrates from the east. The braided riverbed

parcel of Waiho Conservation Area connects at the southern boundary giving good connectivity all round.

If land use were to change in this conservation area some unnatural and unattractive national park boundaries may be revealed over time. Consideration could be given to adding it to the national park.

At least part of this conservation area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff**.

Waiho River Conservation Area (hill) is in outstanding natural character *Unit T48 Waiho River Escarpment*.

- TWP05 **Wahapo Conservation Area** (114ha) 2805301 in 2 parcels is adjacent the SH6 the Franz Joseph Highway near Lake Wahapo. It contains regenerating forest and shares a boundary with Westland Tai Poutini National Park.

This conservation area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff**.

This conservation area is in outstanding natural character *Unit T52 Ōkārito River-Lake Mapourika and Wahapo*.

- TWP05 **Ōkārito Forks Conservation Area** (88ha) 2805302 in 2 parcels protects Zalas Creek near a bend in SH6 Franz Joseph Highway near Lake Wahapo. It contains shrubland and regenerating forest. Non-PCL land around it has been logged. The conservation area is contiguous with Westland Tai Poutini National Park.

Ōkārito Forks Conservation Area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL15 Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Te Kohumarua Bluff**.

It is also in outstanding natural character *Unit T52 Ōkārito River-Lake Mapourika and Wahapo*.

- TWP24 **Ōkārito Conservation Area** (11ha) 2805258

This rectangular stewardship parcel is on a rise south of Ōkārito settlement and contains regenerating coastal forest. It has the beach at the bottom of an escarpment on one side and Westland Tai Poutini National Park along two other boundaries. Non-PCL land in the settlement is to the north with buildings hard up against the boundary.

A walking track from the Ōkārito car park passes through the area to destinations in the national park. Any further development needed to support activities within the national park could be accommodated in the settlement. The landscape appears ecologically integrated and visually indistinguishable from surrounding national park land. Consideration could be given to including it.

- TWP24 **Ōkārito Township Conservation Area** (11ha) 2805297 in 184 parcels

Ōkārito Township Conservation Area is made up of multiple town sections and adjacent lands surveyed when Ōkārito was planned by Gerhard Mueller in 1865. The stewardship parcels are in the south east of the settlement and contain saline wetland and estuary

landscape. They are close to the main car park and walking track up the hill which follows the historic route over the headland.

Some special reserves have been created among the stewardship parcels including five General Government Purpose Reserves: Russell Street-Okarito, Arthur Street-Okarito (x2), and Victoria Street-Okarito (x2). Ōkārīto Church of England Site and Okarito Roman Catholic Church Site Local Purpose Reserves and Ōkārīto Hospital Government Purpose Reserve have also been gazetted. The parcels are divided up by legal road land. The whole cluster borders onto Westland Tai Poutini National Park on two sides.

There are two historic reserves on sections within the existing settlement: Donovan's Store Historic Reserve and Ōkārīto School House Historic Reserve, as well as two recreation reserves, one of which runs along the edge of the beach.

Even though the landscape in the stewardship parcels is currently natural in character the significance of the area is historic for two reasons. Firstly, it ironically demonstrates dynamic coastal processes and past circumstances which caused a town to be surveyed on what is now a tidal wetland, and secondly the wider landscape setting still retains some historic fabric. There is a case for considering a classification which reflects the historic landscape, which exists both perceptually and visually at this location.

(Ōkārīto Bach Conservation Area (part): Is a section in the Ōkārīto Settlement. No information is supplied about this parcel)

- TWP14 **Abut Head Conservation Area** (63ha) 2805255 in 3 parcels

Abut Head is a coastal landform rising to 52m immediately north of the Whataroa River mouth and south of Saltwater Lagoon. Intact wetland communities and wind shorn coastal forest contribute to high natural character. Sandy beach and rocky shoreline are also included. It is unconnected to other PCL although Abut Head Scenic Reserve is a short distance away on the same landform. There are whitebait baches on the lower Whataroa River north bank. One appears to be inside the conservation area boundary.

Abut Head is part of two **Outstanding Natural Landscapes** as it straddles the boundary between *ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers* (see below for details) and *ONL19 Pouerua hāpua/Saltwater Lagoon*.

Abut Head is on the cusp between two outstanding coastal natural character units: *Unit C26 Waitangitaona & Whataroa River Mouth* and *Unit C27 Saltwater Lagoon*.

- TWP18 **Saltwater Forest Conservation Area** (177ha) 2805650

Saltwater Forest Conservation Area is located on a moraine wall and is linked at the north end with Saltwater Ecological Area and shares a long boundary with Westland Te Poutini National Park. A 4WD track passes through it climbing the slope to meet with an old forestry access road across national park land which has been previously logged.

A second parcel of Saltwater Forest Conservation Area covers an area of the Whataroa braided riverbed (see Braided River Valleys section)

This stewardship land is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and*

Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers. Stated site type and values for this landscape are:

Expansive braided river channels flanked by a series of steep and dramatic river escarpments covered in indigenous forest.

Highly dynamic and dramatic interaction/relationship between the river mouths, associated sand bars and the open waters of the Tasman Sea.

Assemblage of river escarpments of similar orientation, altitude, vegetative cover and appearance – the dramatic profile of the escarpment features accentuate this landscapes endemic character.

Unmodified sequences of dune field and wetland vegetation through to mature coastal and low land native forest.

Dynamic natural processes associated with the meandering braids and gravel beds, grading of aggregate sizes, downcutting, river terracing, flood events and inundation.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL17.

*Saltwater Forest Conservation Area is in outstanding natural character Unit T56
Waitangitaona & Whataroa River*

- TWP12 **Duart Farm Conservation Area** (129ha) 2805647 in 3 parcels

This conservation area is contiguous with both parts of Mt Hercules Scenic Reserve and the Saltwater forest outlier of Westland Tai Poutini National Park. It contains relatively unmodified forest on moraine wall slopes extending from a 129m high point at north end down onto the valley floor with drained and cultivated farmland adjacent. It includes a small tributary of the Poerua River. The Whataroa Highway SH6 is aligned along a short section of the southern boundary.

Forest in this conservation area appears to be in better condition than forest on top of the moraine included in the national park and is part of the same ecological continuum, as is forest in adjacent Mt Hercules Scenic Reserve. Consideration could be given to adding it to Mt Hercules Scenic Reserve or including it in the national park.

This part of Duart Farm Conservation Area is **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL17**
*Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Puerua-tāhuna/Poerua, and
Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers*

- TWP08 **Wanganui Forest Conservation Area** (649ha) 2805639 in 10 parcels

Wanganui Forest Conservation Area is in four parts. The coastal part occupies the end of a moraine landform between the Poerua River mouth and Mt Oneone at the mouth of the Wanganui River. It wraps around an outlying square parcel of Saltwater Lagoon Poerua Scenic Reserve on the same landform. Oneone Wildlife Management Area is contiguous.

Harihari Coastal Walk track passes through this conservation area. It includes forested land gently sloping down to the Poerua braided river bed (which is also stewardship land) and a wetland immediately south of the Wanganui River. The wetland is a very similar landscape to wetlands in the adjacent wildlife management area. Pye Creek Wildlife Management Area is connected to the stewardship land at the southern corner.

The part near the river mouth is in outstanding natural character *Unit T63 Little Wanganui River*.

The second, third and fourth parts of Wanganui Forest Conservation Area are on the same

moraine landform some distance further inland. These three forested conservation areas occupy moraine walls which slope down to the La Fontaine and Herepo districts on the Whataroa modified floodplain. The middle parcel is smaller than the two on either side. Minehan Scenic Reserve separates them and Petersen Conservation Area (see below) is part of the same sequence at the south western end.

Part of La Fontaine Conservation Area is contiguous with the smaller middle parcel of the three Wanganui Conservation Area parcels in this group. All are covered with regenerating forested with vertically striped vegetation patterns related to drainage patterns or possibly former sluicing. The forest appears to be in reasonable condition.

This series of moraine wall conservation lands may have been created to provide a visual buffer for logging of forest on top of the moraine landform, in a large area which is not PCL.

- TWP08 **La Fontaine Stream Conservation Area** (10ha) 2805587(part)

This forested conservation area is on a moraine landform immediately above La Fontaine Stream which runs around the foot of the slope and has good freshwater ecosystem values. It is contiguous with Wanganui Forest Conservation Area which in turn connects with other PCL (see above).

- TWP08 **Petersen Road Conservation Area** (48ha) 2805593 is another area of forested moraine wall up to about 120m. It is close to and more or less parallel with Oneone Road with modified valley floor landscape between. Apart from having a different aspect, its natural characteristics are similar to Minehan Scenic Reserve, La Fontaine Stream Conservation Area, and nearby moraine wall parcels of Wanganui Forest Conservation Area. Consideration could be given to combining them all into a single management unit.
- TWP03 **Ianthe Forest Conservation Area** (1404ha) 2805636 in 5 parcels.

Ianthe Forest Conservation Area is long and very irregularly shaped. On Wanganui Bluff 133m part is wrapped around Wanganui Coastal Scenic Reserve and occupies the cliff tops and coastal edges of the landform. It extends up the Wanganui River on moraine walls next to the Wanganui braided river bed. It is contiguous with Wanganui River Flat Wildlife Management Area and connected to Lake Ianthe-Matahi Scenic Reserve at the upstream end of this extension. The extension ends at a high point with trig B2NQ 280m.

From Wanganui Bluff Ianthe Forest Conservation Area also extends along the coast incorporating Pukutuaro and Opuku Coastal Cliffs together with the coastal terraces on top of them, and a long section of Greens Beach with Ounatai Lagoon. Several waterways cross this part of the conservation area to reach the sea or the elongated lagoon including Whakaitai River, Te Rahotaiepa River, Milwain Creek and Allen Creek as well as some unnamed ones. A disused Tramway behind Greens Beach is not included. There are a couple of whitebait baches at its northern end where it connects with Ounatai Conservation Area.

A riparian extension up Te Rahotaiepa River also protects a swamp nearby to the north. It does not extend inland far enough to link with Ianthe Scientific Reserve which is an isolated reserve incorporating the headwaters of Milwain Creek.

Vegetation in Ianthe Forest Conservation Area is very variable with wetland, shrubland,

regenerating forest, mature forest, coastal cliff vegetation. The extensive area of land on top of the moraine landform is being used for forestry and some forestry activity is occurring right up the boundary in places.

Ianthe Forest Conservation Area is part of **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL20 Wakanui/Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River**. Cited site type and values for this landscape are:

Isolated sandy beaches backed by a series of bluffs / cliffs, forest covered slopes, and swampland.

Dramatic interaction of the landscape with Te Tai-o-Rēhua/ the Tasman Seawith its sheer cliffs and scarps, continuous coastal and lowland forest cover providing a consistent patterning to this exposed landscape.

Varied amalgam of raw and exposed coastal landforms, strong elevated relief, windswept vegetation which impart a strong sense of naturalness.

Combination of bluffs and scarps, continuous vegetation cover, saltwater lagoons, dune fields, and wetlands and the tranquillity of the extensive swampland reinforce the natural qualities of this landscape.

Unmodified vegetation sequences from dune fields and wetland vegetation through to mature coastal and low land native forest.

Area below mean high water springs also scheduled in Proposed Regional Coastal Plan as ONL20.

It is also in an outstanding natural character *Unit T63 Little Wanganui River*.

- **TWP03 Ounatai Lagoon Conservation Area** (48ha) 2805516 This is a long skinny conservation area on the beach seaward of Ounatai Lagoon. It include sandy beach and dunes with natural vegetation patterns and possibly pingao.

Boundaries of the Outstanding Natural Landscape are unusually fragmented at this location and it is not clear if Ounatai Conservation area is included. It probably is.

It is definitely in outstanding natural character *Unit C28 Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River*

- **TWP 03 Waitaha River Mouth Conservation Area** (3ha) 2805515

South of the mouth of the Waitaha River is a coastal terrace with some baches. In the centre, is the Waitaha River Mouth Conservation Area which includes a small area of wetland but mostly two areas cleared from the surrounding vegetation which looks as if they function as open space for recreation. There are vehicle tracks, or possibly a recently built fence, around the edges of the clearings.

A pair of marginal strips to the south (Ounatai Lagoon Marginal Strip) are more or less aligned with a waterway which runs between the braided Waitaha River and Ounatai Lagoon. There is another pair called Lower Waitaha Marginal Strip at the confluence of this waterway with the big river. Neither of these is linked with Waitaha River Mouth Conservation Area. It is unconnected to any other PCL.

This conservation area is part of **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL20 Wakanui/Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River**.

It is in outstanding natural character *Unit C28 Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River*

- **TWP04 Duffers Creek Conservation Area** Ianthe (287ha)

This significant patch of podocarp forest is contiguous with Pukekura Scenic Reserve but is not visible from the Harihari Highway SH6. Duffers Creek, which has its source in the

Bonar Range, forms the northeastern boundary with logged forest beyond. Logged forest is being replanted around other sides as well.

Duffers Creek Conservation Area provides ecological support for Pukekura Scenic Reserve which is aligned along both sides of the highway and has a high edge to area ratio. Although the forest in Duffers Creek Conservation Area has been cut over and the impacts of the harvest process are still clearly visible in places, with time it will grow to be more like the old growth podocarp forest in the adjacent scenic reserve. Consideration could be given to including it with Pukekura Scenic Reserve.

This parcel of Duffers Creek Conservation Area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL21 Matahi/Lake Ianthe**. Site Type and values for this landscape are:

Enclosed lake basin that is strongly defined by steep slopes covered in mature indigenous forest.

Very extensive and homogenous mature forest around the entire lake fringe that directly interacts with the open waters of the lake. Intact sequences of wetland and swamp species through to canopy native forest.

Intact sequences of wetland and swamp species through to canopy native forest.

High transient values associated with evident bird life on the lake and surrounding indigenous forest.

The tranquillity of the lake, vast unmodified sequences of native forest amplify the natural qualities of this landscape.

Due to its intimate scale and enclosure this landscape as a whole is a landmark.

- TWP02 **Duffers Creek Conservation Area** Pukekura(0.3ha) 2809701 in 2 parcels

Two small rectangular parcels of regenerating lowland forest on either side of the Harihari Highway SH6 just north of Duffers Creek. The parcel on the seaward side of the road includes an access way to a dwelling. It is linked at one end with an outlying rectangle of Pukekura Scenic Reserve. This parcel acts as a buffer between the adjacent private land and Pukekura Scenic Reserve. It screens the dwelling from the road.

The parcel on the other side of the road is set back into the boundary of Pukekura Scenic Reserve. Consideration could be given to including both in the scenic reserve.

- HOK51 **Pukekura Conservation Area** (0.5ha) 2805640 is in the forest clearing settlement of Pukekura at the foot of Allens Hill, on the corner of the Harihari Highway SH6 and Allen Road. It contains podocarp forest and is contiguous with Waitaha Scenic Reserve. It is not clear why it was not included in the scenic reserve at the time it was gazetted as it seems indistinguishable.

- TWP01 **Kākāpotahi Conservation Area** (3 ha) 2805519

On a hillside adjacent to the confluence of the Waitaha and Kākāpotahi Rivers, and the “banana bridge” over Waitaha River on the Harihari Highway SH 6 is this small area of podocarp-broadleaf forest, intact native riparian vegetation above the Waitaha River. It is contiguous with Waitaha Scenic Reserve and indistinguishable from it ecologically and visually. For this visually sensitive location above the bridge it has a better contour-following boundary than the Scenic Reserve behind it. Consideration could be given to including it with the Waitaha Scenic Reserve.

Kākāpotahi Conservation Area is located in Outstanding Natural Landscape **ONL20 Wakanui/Wanganui Bluff to Waitaha River**

It is in high natural character *Unit T66 Waitaha & Kakapotahi River Flats.*

Ka Tiritiri o Te Moana (Main Divide) Te Wahi Pounamu Place

This part of Te Wahi Pounamu Place includes all the mountain and hill country along the main divide between Westland Tai Poutini National Park and Waitaha, continuing into Hokitika Place. Characterised by dissected hill country, often with alpine tops, generally steep narrow valleys, and high rainfall. Gorges are recurring features. High natural character.

Mostly east of the alpine fault. Remote and increasingly inaccessible toward the main divide. The Bonar Range which extends out to Pukekura is also included.

Most of the stewardship land in this part is in two or three huge conservation areas: Waitangi Forest and Waitaha Forest Conservation Areas. The rest are smaller parcels on the boundaries which are logical additions

This area is governed by Westland District Council, one of the three district councils working together on [Te Taio o Poutini draft plan](#).

In Schedule 5 of *Te Taio o Poutini (draft)* all of the land along the main divide is identified as outstanding natural landscape some areas of which cover vast areas. For Te Wahi Pounamu Place the relevant ones north of Westland Tai Poutini National Park are:

ONL14 Aoraki/Mt Cook

ONL15 Koihaihai/Gillespies Point to Kohumarua Bluff

ONL17 Lower Waitangitāhuna/Waitangitaona, Whataroa, Pouerua-tāhuna/Pouerua, and Whakanui/Wanganui Rivers (part only)

ONL18 Mt Elie de Beaumont-Mt Whitcombe

ONL22 Bonar, Rangitoto & Bald Hill Ranges

ONL24 Kea Pass-Arthurs Pass-Amuri Pass

In the *West Coast Region Natural Character Study (Brown 2013)* ten braided rivers in Hokitika Place are assessed as having high or outstanding natural character. These are:

Unit T55 Upper Waitangitaona River (outstanding)

Unit T57 Whataroa River Flats (high) upstream part

Unit T58 Perth and Upper Whataroa River (outstanding)

Unit T59 Pouerua Rivers (outstanding)

Unit T60 Upper Wanganui River (outstanding)

Unit T67 Upper Waitaha River (outstanding)

There are nine stewardship land parcels in this part of Te Wahi Pounamu Place:

- TWP05 Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (53,835ha) 2809665 in 31 parcels
- TWP05 Waitangi Forest Conservation Area (3,492ha) 2805303 in 4 parcels
- TWP27 Waiho Gorge Conservation Area (36ha) 2805303 (part on hill)
- TWP05 Waiho Gorge Conservation Area(2ha) 2805315 in 4 parcels
- TWP05 Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (19ha) 2809661
- TWP05 Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area (19ha) 2809662
- TWP05 Ferguson Creek Conservation Area (63ha) 2805654
- TWP11 Harihari SH6 Conservation Area (1ha) 2805657

- HOK52 Waitaha Forest Conservation Area (30,815ha) 2805641 in 25 parcels (part)

Landscape factors for decision-makers to consider:

- TWP05 **Waitangi Forest Conservation Area** (53,835ha) 2809665 in 31 parcels
Waitangi Forest Conservation Area is contiguous with Westland Tai Poutini and Aoraki Mt Cook National Parks along south boundaries. Rising to Mt Mannering 2669m and Broderick Peak 2669m with Whataroa Saddle 2400m between them. Includes glaciers. Surrounds the south end of the Adams Wilderness Area with Mt Adams 2208m on the border between the two. Includes Bryce Range, Butler Range and the eastern side of Maximilian Range.

Includes catchments of the upper Waitangitāhuna River, upper Whataroa River, Dry Creek, two McCullouchs Creeks, part of the upper Poerua River and the south bank of the upper Wanganui River.

This conservation area is contiguous with Rohutu Scenic Reserve and Whataroa Scenic Reserve (which provides the backdrop to Whataroa settlement), Mt Hercules Scenic Reserve, Poerua River Scenic Reserve and Wilberg Range Scenic Reserve (which is the backdrop to Harihari).

Most of Waitangi Forest Conservation Area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape ONL14 Aoraki/Mt Cook**. Site type and values for this landscape are described as:

Extensive landscape consisting of dramatic mountain ranges that extend westward from the main divide, high altitude peaks, glaciers, permanent snowfields, and incised valley systems. Interplay of mature indigenous forest and vegetative sequence from lowland beech forest through to alpine scrub communities reinforcing topography and pronounced relief – particularly where horizontal vegetation patterns including seral beech forest and scrub mark glacial retreat.

Exposed peaks and ridge tops revealing underlying geology are highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes. Dramatic etched bluffs are highly expressive of formative glacial processes.

Combination of etched ridge lines, rocky outcrops, expansive permanent ice flows, glacial lakes, vegetation sequences giving way to raw and exposed peaks and ridges are highly natural.

Te Moenga-o-Tuawe/Fox Glacier and Ngā Roimata-a-Hinehukatere/Franz Josef Glacier, Douglas Neve, Mt Tasman, Sefton, Elie De Beaumont, Hicks, & Aoraki are key / representative landmarks within this landscape.

A number of outstanding natural character units have been identified within the boundaries of this extensive conservation area, including *Unit T55 Upper Waitangitāhuna River, Unit T58 Perth and Upper Whataroa River, Unit T59 Poerua Rivers* and part of *Unit T60 Upper Wanganui River*.

- TWP05 **Waitangi Forest Conservation Area** (3,492ha) 2805303 in 4 parcels
This conservation area is located at the southern boundary of Waitangi Forest Conservation Area just north of the Burster Range in Westland Tai Poutini National Park, close to Franz Joseph/Waiiau settlement. The conservation area is contiguous on two sides with the larger Waitangi Forest Conservation Area with more national park land along the western boundary. Non-PCL abuts on the valley floor north of Franz Joseph/Waiiau township.

This smaller parcel of is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL15 Koihahai/Gillespies Point to Kohumarua Bluff* which extends some distance inland at this point.

- The forested, mountainous landscape of both large parcels of **Waitangi Forest Conservation Area** is a homogeneous whole. There is no reason to divide or compartmentalise any of it on the basis of landscape differences. Waitaha Forest Conservation Area which is contiguous along the upper Wanganui River is also very similar. Consideration could be given to combining them all into a single entity.
- TWP27 **Waiho Gorge Conservation Area** (36ha) 2805314 one of two parcels On the lower slopes of the end of the Burster Range, just outside the boundary of Westland Te Poutini National Park, part of this conservation area forms a forested backdrop to the settlement of Franz Joseph/Waiiau. The other part of this conservation area is on the flat in the settlement and is considered in the Braided River Valleys chapter. Consideration could be given to adding this parcel and the 2ha parcel below to Westland Tai Poutini National Park as they are on a single landform and are ecologically and visually indistinguishable.

Both this parcel and the one below are on the boundary of Outstanding Natural Landscape *ONL14 Aoraki/Mt Cook* but outside.

- TWP05 **Waiho Gorge Conservation Area** (2ha) 2805315 is a smaller parcel attached to the end of the larger parcel above, with similar attributes.
- TWP05 **Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area** (19ha) 2809661 is located on a hillside above SH6 the Franz Joseph Highway as it descends to the Whataroa floodplain. Part of it is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL15 Koihahai/Gillespies Point to Kohumarua Bluff*.
- TWP05 **Waitangitāhuna River Conservation Area** (19ha) 2809662 This conservation area is on Ralfes Knob 411m landform, contiguous with Rohutu Scenic Reserve. The Franz Joseph Highway SH6 forms one boundary. It is on the boundary of *ONL15 Koihahai/Gillespies Point to Kohumarua Bluff*.
- TWP05 **Ferguson Creek Conservation Area** (63ha) 2805654 is a triangular parcel near the intersection of the Poerua Valley Road with SH6 at the south end of the Wilberg Range. It is contiguous with the larger Waitangi Forest Conservation Area on along one boundary and Poerua Scenic Reserve along another, with non-PCL along the hypotenuse. It does not include any of Ferguson Creek or its catchment which is mostly in other PCL.

This conservation area is in **Outstanding Natural Landscape** *ONL18 Mt Elie de Beaumont-Mt Whitcombe* near the western edge. Site type and values for this landscape are: Extensive landscape consisting of dramatic mountain ranges that extend westward from the main divide, high altitude peaks, glaciers, permanent snowfields, and incised valley systems. Interplay of mature indigenous forest and vegetative sequence from lowland beech forest through to alpine scrub communities reinforcing topography and pronounced relief – particularly where horizontal vegetation patterns including seral beech forest and scrub mark glacial retreat.

Exposed peaks and ridge tops revealing underlying geology are highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes. Dramatic etched bluffs are highly expressive of formative glacial processes.

Combination of etched ridge lines, rocky outcrops, expansive permanent ice flows, glacial lakes, vegetation sequences giving way to raw and exposed peaks and ridges are highly natural.

The Garden of Eden Ice Plateau, Garden of Allah, Mt Elie De Beaumont, Whitcombe, Mannering, Moffat, and Newton Peak are key/representative landmarks within this landscape.

- TWP11 **Harihari SH6 Conservation Area** (1ha) 2805657 is a small rectangle of forested toe slope beside the Franz Joseph Highway SH6 just north of Harihari township. It is set into Wilberg Scenic Reserve which surrounds it on three Boundaries. The highway is the fourth boundary. It is unclear why this small area was left out of the Wilberg Scenic Reserve when it was created.
- HOK52 **Waitaha Forest Conservation Area** (30,815ha)2805641 in 25 parcels (part) Waitaha Forest Conservation Area includes north of the upper Wanganui River and the upper Waitaha River Catchments. It includes the Smyth Range, Bonar Range and Mt Allen 1524m. Part of Lake Ianthe-Matahi Scenic Reserve also covers the end of the Bonar Range and is contiguous with Waitaha Forest Conservation Area.

Waitangi Forest Conservation Area is contiguous in south west, Adams Wilderness Area to the south and Wanganui-Otira Catchment Conservation Area to the east. It also shares a boundary with Totara-Mikonui Forest Conservation Area to north west. Consideration could be given to managing all this forested high country as a single entity.

The landscape is dissected, steep and forested throughout with semi braided river beds. Morgan Gorge and Waitaha Gorge are features on the upper Waitaha River. Alpine zones above treeline and some glaciers at the main divide. Remote with very high natural character.

All of Waitaha Forest Conservation Area is **Outstanding Natural Landscape** in either *ONL18 Mt Elie de Beaumont-Mt Whitcombe* or *ONL22 Bonar, Rangitoto & Bald Hill Ranges*. Site type and values cited for ONL 22 are:

Assemblage of heavily dissected ranges, foothills, and valley systems with broad rounded peaks whose underlying geology set them apart visually from the high altitude ranges to the east.

Interplay of mature indigenous forest and vegetative sequence from lowland beech forest through to alpine scrub communities reinforcing topography and pronounced relief. Exposed peaks and ridge tops revealing underlying geology are highly expressive of the landscapes formative and ongoing natural processes.

Assemblage of ridges, peaks, and mountaintops of similar orientation, attitudes, vegetative cover and appearance. Contiguous mountain range and foothills. Mature beech* forest giving way to alpine vegetation at higher altitudes. The Hokitika Gorge is a well known landmark within this landscape.

(*Note: forest unlikely to be beech at this location)

Outstanding natural character units *Unit T60 Upper Wanganui River* and *Unit T67 Upper Waitaha River* are within the boundaries of Waitaha Forest Conservation Area.

References

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Note: The maps currently used in the draft Plan were produced in 2013 and recently digitised for the draft Plan. People have drawn attention to mapping errors in relation to the High Natural Character areas in particular. The Outstanding Natural Landscape and High/Outstanding Coastal Natural Character boundaries are currently being reviewed through an updated field assessment from the landscape architect.