

land area: ONAHAU ESTUARY				
PIGEON BAY CRITERIA				
(a) THE NATURAL SCIENCE FACTORS:	geological	topographical	ecological	dynamic components
	<p>Quaternary: the Little Onahau and the Onahau River form well sorted gravel and modern flood plains as well as young fan gravels. To the northwest, the Pariwhakaoho River has deposited clay-bound gravel and minor fan deposits (lowest aggradation surfaces above major rivers). To the south slightly weathered gravel and minor fan deposits (forming lowest aggradation surfaces above major rivers). The seaward side (north east and south east) is characterised by Sand and Beach Ridges, with a sand barrier on the south east. (Geological & Nuclear Sciences 1:250 000 Geological Map 9)</p>	<p>Onahau inlet: approximately 33 hectares, Saltmarsh species at head, with narrow sandspit forming a barrier to the beach. Several small streams feed in to the freshwater swamp at head of estuary. Surrounded by Manuka. Land adjacent to coastline has been developed for farming.</p>	<p>Nationally threatened banded rail (<i>Rallus philippensis assimilis</i>), regionally threatened fern bird (<i>Bowdleria punctata punctata</i>) and marsh crake (<i>Porzana pusilla affinis</i>). Kina (<i>Evechinus chloroticus</i>) beds present on either side of estuary mouth. The Golden Bay ED covers the alluvial valleys of Takaka and Aorere, as well as their adjoining older alluvial terraces. The Golden Bay ecological district was dominated by podocarp forest with totara dominant on drier alluvium. Occasional black beech and kahikatea swamp forest in wetter areas, associated with pukatea. Northern rater along coastal and lower limestone areas. coastal flax and cabbage tree swamp was common, wetter terraces held pakihī shrubland and rimu/silver pine forest. low on drier slopes was red, hard and black beech & rimu. (see Appendix 7)</p>	<p>windswept manuka, movement of sediment down in to estuary and out along beach area. Changes to sand spit by vegetation, wind, waves, current.</p>
(b) AESTHETIC VALUES	memorability		naturalness	
	<p>Onahau has aesthetic values associated with the estuary although it is visually separated from the Coast by a sandspit. Aesthetic value associated with the natural character of the Manuka shrubland and the warm browns of the saltmarsh that surrounds the estuary and the context of the site being part of the sweep of the Golden Bay coastline.</p>		<p>The Golden Bay ED has almost completely been cleared of its original vegetation. patches of alluvial forest remain (totara, black beech, kahikatea) and remnant rata on coastal limestone. Pakihī forest now replaced by manuka-dominant shrub. Extensive estuaries remain and sand dunes have been largely covered by marram grass. Kanuka replaced beech forest on drier hills. Farming, logging, mining all contributed to vegetation clearance. bracken fern, kanuka and manuka regenerating on abandoned farmland with some significant patches of totara. Gorse, barberry, hawthorn, buddleia and spanish heath are widespread weeds with banana passionfruit prominent around the coast. (see Appendix 7). Presence of boat in the estuary and two houses are located immediately adjacent to the estuary reduce the perception of naturalness however natural qualities dominate. Large area of sandy beach, presence of gorse, sand dunes and pines, gum and macrocarpa.</p>	
(c) EXPRESSIVENESS (LEGIBILITY)	formative processes			
	<p>shell banks along the shore. The sandspit and estuary mouth is in its natural state and expresses the formative processes by current and wind that have created it.</p>			
(d) TRANSIENT VALUES	occasional presence of wildlife		values at certain times of day/year	
	<p>High tide roost for important wader species. River/ water channels exposed at low tide. Derelict wharf exposed (near Rangihaeata). Oystercatchers seen along coastline and potential of other sea birds or wader species; or other animals such as dolphin/whale stranding.</p>		<p>Reef exposed along coastline near Rangihaeata head at low tide. Daily exposure to large amount of shallow shoreline through tidal activity. - patterns exposed in the Onahau estuary - channels when the tide is out. Calm reflective quality of water mirroring sky and surrounding land with high tide on still day.</p>	
(e) VALUES SHARED/RECOGNISED				
	<p>considered of national importance due to presence of the vulnerable banded rail and due to high degree of naturalness due to lack of extensive human development. Coastline utilised for recreational activities including boating and white baiting (in streams at the head of the estuary). A rahui (ban) exists of commercial harvesting of shellfish from the west side of Patons Rock to the north side of the Onahau Estuary (Department of Conservation, Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy, 1993; Occasional Publication No.14 pg 63). Public access along coastline, but Onahau estuary is not frequently visited although white baiters fish the small streams that feed into the estuary. The beach area is popular for recreation, with horses seen being exercised at the beach on my site visit. Valued as an intricate and interesting part of the wider Golden Bay Coastline.</p>			
(f) VALUE TO TANGATAWHENUA				
	<p>On-site archaeological remains, and many artifacts unearthed through farming practices and along beaches (Department of Conservation, Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy, 1993; Occasional Publication No.14 pg 63).</p>			
(g) HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS				
	<p>Onahau Estuary marked the beginning of the Coastal Highway (before road was formed) between Takaka and Collingwood.</p>			
CONCLUSION:	COASTLINE INCLUDING ESTUARY: OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPE/FEATURE			