

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background to study	1
1.2	Brief	1
1.3	Extent of Study Area	1
<b>2</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	Process	2
2.2	Limitations to Study	2
2.3	Review of Legal Status of Existing Coastal Access	3
2.4	Physical Status of Existing Coastal Access	3
2.5	Extent of Consultation	4
<b>3</b>	<b>General Walkway Information</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1	Benefits of Walkways	4
3.2	Walkways and Tourism	5
3.3	Demand and Potential Use for Walkways	6
3.4	Walkway Classifications	6
3.5	KiwiWalks	7
3.6	Te Araroa Trust / Te Araroa Walkway	7
<b>4</b>	<b>Walkway Issues</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1	Multiple Agencies Involvement	8
4.2	Maori Cultural Issues	9
4.3	Neighbour's Privacy and Amenity Values	9
4.4	Safety and Liability	10
4.5	District Planning	11
	4.5.1 Transitional District Plan	11
	4.5.2 Proposed District Plan	11
4.6	Whangarei District Council Open Space Strategy (Draft)	13

4.7	Ownership and Legal Access	14
4.7.1	Legal/Ownership Constraints to Walkway Development	14
4.7.2	Opportunities to Overcome Legal/Ownership Constraints where Land is not Publicly Owned	16
4.7.3	Unformed Legal Roads	16
4.7.4	Pleasure of Land Owner Walkways	18
4.8	Opportunities to Enable Access	18
4.8.1	Esplanade Reserves and Strips	18
4.9	Marsden Point	20
4.9.1	Marsden Point Bulk Cargo Port	20
4.9.2	Marsden Point- Ruakaka Structure Plan	20
<b>5</b>	<b>Potential Walkway Route</b>	<b>20</b>
5.1	Section 1 – Langs Beach to Waipu township (maps A and B)	20
5.2	Section 2 – Waipu township to Ruakaka (maps B and C)	22
5.3	Section 3 – Ruakaka to One Tree Point (maps C and D)	22
5.4	Section 4 – Town Basin to Onerahi (map E)	23
5.5	Section 5 – Onerahi to Parua Bay (maps E and F)	24
5.6	Section 6 – Parua Bay to McLeod Bay (map G)	24
5.7	Section 7 –McLeod Bay to Urquharts Bay (maps G and H)	25
5.8	Section 8 –Urquharts Bay to Ocean Beach (map H)	26
5.9	Section 9 – Ocean Beach to Kauri Mountain (map H)	26
5.10	Section 10 – Kauri Mountain to Pataua (map I)	26
5.11	Section 11 – Pataua to Ngunguru (map J)	27
5.12	Section 12 – Ngunguru to Matapouri (map K)	28
5.13	Section 13 – Matapouri to Whananaki (map L)	28
5.14	Section 14 – Whananaki to Mimiwhangata (maps L and M)	28

<b>6</b>	<b>Physical Constraints to Walkway Development</b>	<b>29</b>
6.1.1	Terrain	29
6.1.2	Watercourses, Harbours and Estuaries	31
6.1.3	Options for crossing Horahora and Ngunguru Rivers	33
6.1.4	Conclusions	34
6.1.5	Ecologically Sensitive Areas	35
6.1.6	Water Quality Sensitive Areas	36
<b>7</b>	<b>Areas for Reserve Extension or Acquisition</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Magnitude of Development Works</b>	<b>38</b>
8.1.1	Walkway types and proportion of route	39
<b>9</b>	<b>Next Stages of work</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Suggested Strategic Actions</b>	<b>41</b>

## Appendices

Appendix 1: About Te Araroa Walkway

Appendix 2: Health and Safety in Employment

Appendix 3: Maps of Route (A - M)

Appendix 4: Route Data Sheets

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to study

Whangarei District Council commissioned Littoralis Landscape Architecture and Northland Planning Services to prepare a scoping study examining the feasibility of a public walkway system extending from Bream Head to Mimimiwhangata on the District's eastern coastline. The impetus for the study came from members of the coastal community, who had observed the potential of a number of unconnected paths and tracks up the coast, along with the belts of Council and Department of Conservation administered land that stretch up the seaboard.

Council recognised that the route had considerable potential, both as a recreational asset for local residents and as a drawcard for improved ecotourism / adventure tourism opportunities for the District. Funding to undertake the scoping study was approved in June 1999, with work commencing on the project later that year.

## 1.2 Brief

The study required assessment of a walking trail route that provides the best possible access to the scenery offered by the coastal landscape. Maximising the use of public land was a key requirement.

Future connections to other walking tracks had to be considered, with particular consideration of the opportunities for this segment of walkway to integrate with a New Zealand-wide walkway system that is being established by Te Araroa Trust. The Te Araroa walkway project is described in section 3.6 of this report.

Other matters specifically identified in the scope of the project included:

- Issues related to crossing private and Maori land.
- River crossing methods.
- Breaking the trail into blocks of 3-6 hours of leisurely walking.
- Considering maintenance, safety and legal aspects.

## 1.3 Extent of Study Area

The coastline of the Whangarei District Council extends from south of the Langs Beach area to north of the Whangaruru Harbour. For the purposes of this study however, the study has focussed particularly on the coastal strip between Langs Beach and the Department of Conservation reserve at Mimiwhangata.

In circumstances where a route that hugs the coastline is not feasible, usually due to ownership issues or terrain difficulties, inland alternatives have been examined.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Process

In recognition of the restricted brief of the study, the investigations outlined in this report have been focussed on establishing overall feasibility and general issues. In summary, the process followed when undertaking the project has been:

- Briefing and background discussions with Council officers;
- Review and outputting of Council GIS (Geographic Information System - a term for computer based mapping and data handling systems) and data records for spatial and legal information.
- Examination of District Plan influences.
- Site visits to readily accessible parts of the routes and walking some sections of the route to further clarify accessibility.
- Preparation of this report and associated mapping.

The notes that follow in this section of the report set out the constraints that apply to the study, the range of information used and the very limited extent of discussion with other parties that has been undertaken.

### 2.2 Limitations to Study

This study is confined to a scoping analysis of the issues, constraints and opportunities to develop a coastal walkway for the study area. The restricted nature of the brief has meant that the analysis has not involved the following:

- A detailed site inspection or "ground truthing" of all parts of the routes.
- A comprehensive title search of the land over which a walkway may pass.
- A detailed engineering feasibility assessment of routes and formation issues.
- Any form of public consultation.
- Any consultation with landowners. Mapping of potential walkway connections across privately owned land has therefore been avoided.

The majority of a route across the study area can be achieved on publicly-owned land. Routes over private land have not been investigated, although cursory viewing of topographic maps suggests that there may be alignments over private land which are likely to be preferable to portions of the route presented by this study. Sections 4.6 and 4.7 of the report describe measures that can be applied where access is negotiated over private land, recognising that these would be addressed on a “willing parties” basis.

## 2.3 Review of Legal Status of Existing Coastal Access

The following Whangarei District Council GIS (computer based Geographic Information System) data sets were reviewed to identify existing “public” land in the study area:

- Rating Database – “local government’ category.
- Proposed District Plan – ‘Open Space’ environment category.
- LINZ – ‘reserve’, ‘local’, ‘public’, ‘recreational reserves’, ‘streets’, ‘water’, ‘road’, ‘harbour’, ‘crown land’, ‘accessways’, ‘esplanade reserves’, ‘Government land’ categories.

In addition the following Department of Conservation GIS data was examined:

- LINZ – Department of Conservation estate.
- Marginal strips.

The following Whangarei District Council GIS data sets were analysed to identify opportunities and constraints:

- Transitional District Plan.
- Proposed District Plan.
- NZMS 260 Topography.

The following Whangarei District Council GIS data sets were reviewed to identify “private” land in the study area:

- Rating database – ‘private’, ‘Maori’, categories
- LINZ - ‘Maori land – ‘ML’, ‘other’ categories

## 2.4 Physical Status of Existing Coastal Access

Aerial photography (hardcopy) from the following sources were used:

- Whangarei District Council – black and white vertical.
- Northland Regional Council – colour (1997).
- Lands and Survey – black and white vertical.
- Whangarei District Council – colour obliques from LA4 landscape Assessment (1997).

## 2.5 Extent of Consultation

Detailed public and landowner consultation was deliberately left aside by this study, since the primary purpose of the report was to assess whether the concept of a broad-scale public walkway along a large chunk of the District’s eastern coastline is physically and legally feasible. Comprehensive discussions with tangata whenua, landowners, regulatory bodies, user groups, and local communities are a critical part of further advancing this project and need to be programmed into the early phases of more detailed ongoing work.

# 3 General Walkway Information

## 3.1 Benefits of Walkways

Walking has been recognised as a very popular form of recreation in New Zealand. In addition to the health and wellbeing that it brings to participants, walking - and walking facilities - have a range of other benefits and functions that are worthy of consideration:

- It caters for a range of age groups and fitness levels. Few “civilised” walkways are so demanding that the majority of people are unable to use them. The range of potential users therefore needs to be carefully considered when designing routes and access details.
- Walkways provide an opportunity to escape urban life and the confines of motor vehicle travel, allowing people to experience the natural environment more fully. They often introduce walkers to areas that can’t be accessed by any other means.
- Paths can offer educational benefits, not only by simply putting walkers into an environment where there is a lot to be learnt, but by deliberately designing the route to introduce people to a range of features, ecotypes and experiences.
- Walkways provide a relatively “low key” means of access, so their impact in the sensitive settings that are usually the most interesting and attractive is often minimal, particularly when compared with the modifications needed to create a road.

- In most terrain, walking routes are cheap to create, so their “benefit-cost” ratios are very high.
- Walkways can link parks and extend the perceived size and remoteness of parks without requiring large amounts of extra land to be obtained.
- A good system of walkways could be used as a catalyst to promote tourism interest in the District.
- Economic benefits can flow to local communities and the District more generally. Such benefits include income earned by local people during formation, construction and maintenance of the facility, transportation and ferry services, provision of accommodation, food and walking guides or porters, craft and other retail sales, and numerous other economic spin-offs.

## 3.2 Walkways and Tourism

Walkways are often promoted as tourist attractions. Tourists want to see things they have not seen elsewhere. They also need to be comfortable in the environmental conditions that they find (signage, good track surface, and interpretation), they should be provided with good access to the walkway (with facilities such as car parking) and the tourist should know what to expect in the way of facilities (such as the presence or lack of toilets or shops). The Council could support walkway development specifically for tourists where it can be proved that the development will extend the length of stay of visitors or attract more visitors.

Another area of interest for many communities in New Zealand has been the development of private commercial walks, such as the Banks Peninsula Track. The Banks Peninsula Track in the South Island takes two or four days, and crosses four private farms and some areas of public land. Huts provide a reasonably high standard of accommodation, and some food can be purchased on site. The track meanders around the peninsula, taking advantage of beaches, views and remnant bush. Only paying guests are permitted to use the track. They are guaranteed a bed in private accommodation each night and few other people to disrupt the sense of remoteness of the Peninsula. It has proved to be popular and economically viable, as well as an exercise in land-owner partnership.

Although this type of track is not necessarily appropriate for the Whangarei District Council or any other public agency to initiate, manage or host, it could be a useful addition to the track resources of District if undertaken by the private sector. Equally, the principles of private tracks, with their facilities and infrastructure, could be translated to a public walkway such as that considered by this study, to bring economic benefits to the various communities along its route and to the District as a whole. A specific strategy to promote and manage such a venture could be beneficial, and would need to analyse how



any effects on other users or the environment are avoided, minimised or mitigated.

A scarcity of signage and other information about walkways often disadvantages tourists in particular. Visitors find out about activities and facilities (not just walkways) through family and friends "back home", guidebooks and brochures. In contrast, surveys of users of walkways elsewhere in New Zealand <sup>1</sup> show that they largely got their information about walkways either through word of mouth or they had always known about it (75 %). Walkways may be reasonably well known by residents with good local knowledge, whilst the tourist who is not associated with a resident is frequently disadvantaged by a lack of available knowledge or information about walkways which would be suitable for them.

Another significant consideration is that tourists often stay with friends and family at their destination. This means that promotion of walkways through guidebooks and brochures aimed at residents will also be appropriate for many tourists. Campaigns that communicate information about walkways to residents, whether through brochures, newspaper articles or interpretative events, will assist visitors, either directly or indirectly through their friends and family.

### 3.3 Demand and Potential Use for Walkways

Overseas research suggests that keen walkers and bikers amongst the resident population use walkways frequently, while the majority of the population do not. The latest Hillary Commission research for New Zealand shows that walking is very popular, although cycling is also important.<sup>2</sup> An important proviso of demand analysis however, is a statement of the obvious - that walkways have to be present and potential users aware of their presence before they will be used.

### 3.4 Walkway Classifications

Classification systems are used to communicate information about walkways. Users expectations will be, in part, based on the initial classification and their enjoyment evaluated against their expectations and their experience <sup>3</sup>. Classification systems need not direct what activities are allowed or not allowed on walkways, but provide enough information about such variables as track surface, vegetation clearance and gradient.

The first attempt at common classification systems system was developed in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and local authorities in 1992. It had clear specifications such as width minimum, vegetation clearance and gradient. Its key problem was that it was specific to walking. The 1992 system has been superceded by a new Track Service Standard system, which fits the visitor groupings for DoC's 1997 Visitor Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Dunedin City council October 1998, at page 34

<sup>2</sup> Hillary Commission 1997

<sup>3</sup> Hugo 1997

The new system has five visitor groups which 'drive' standards for tracks'. The five groups are: Short Stop Travelers (SST); Day Visitors (DV); Backcountry Comfort Seekers (BCC); Backcountry Adventurers (BCA); and Remoteness Seekers (RS).

This system is still largely walking oriented, and relies heavily on the Department of Conservation's Visitor Strategy. It is limited for local authority use because the Visitor Strategy targets different clients to that of Territorial Local Authorities and because of its pedestrian focus. A number of local authorities have adopted the Track Service Standard system in modified form to suit their own needs <sup>4</sup>and it is suggested that Whangarei District Council may wish to use a similar system to guide the development and management of its walkway network. Adaptation of the Track Service Standard for the Council's requirements should also aim to provide a system that integrates with Council's asset management programmes.

### 3.5 KiwiWalks

KiwiWalks is a new Hillary Commission programme, intended to encourage participation and activity. The programme is walking oriented. Criteria are set and walkways can be accredited by application to Sport Northland. The eligibility criteria are: able to be completed in one hour or less; maintained to a reasonable standard by the controlling body; suitable for most ages and fitness levels; easily accessible to a person wearing leisure footwear; free; have a reasonable level of information available (that fits within the KiwiWalk Information Guidelines). Sport Northland is responsible for launching the programme in the region. The KiwiWalks concept seems to be based on the Hillary Commission's research results that show 37 % of all adults have gone for a short walk in the last 12 months, 36 % have gone for a longer walk, and 60 % have gone for 'any walk' <sup>5</sup>. Thus, it appears that the programme wants people to be able to identify a suitable walkway through its signage. However, the signage is not free. It costs Councils to purchase, install and maintain the KiwiWalk signs. The additional signage of KiwiWalks may also add to the clutter of signs on walkways.

### 3.6 Te Araroa Trust / Te Araroa Walkway

Te Araroa means "The Long Pathway". The Trust has been established with a number of sources of private funding to plan and promote a foot trail from one end of New Zealand to the other. The organisation has already explored a route roughly covering the stretch of terrain examined by this Coastal Walkway Scoping Study, but it follows a rather different alignment to that suggested by this report, most marked where it peels away from the coast at Ngunguru and heads inland for Whangarei. A map of Te Araroa Trust's preliminary pathway is shown in Appendix 1.

That the Trust has selected a different route to that examined by this study is probably not of great moment. It is envisaged that various parts of The Long Pathway will be replaced as new, improved pathways are developed, rather

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<sup>4</sup> Hutt City 1998 and Dunedin City 1998

<sup>5</sup> Hillary Commission 1997

like a large jigsaw. What is important is that the route considered by this scoping study fits well with the connection point heading down the coast from Mokau and that it has the scope to offer an extended and more scenic route to connect with The Long Pathway's departure south from Whangarei District.

What is also important is the benefits of maintaining close liaison with Te Araroa Trust from this point forward as Council moves to establish a coastal walkway. The Trust appears to have established itself as the premier organisation overseeing broad-scale walkway development in the country and will probably be able to provide assistance to the Council to this end. It is also an increasingly used source of information for visitors planning walking holidays.

As part of establishing a relationship with Te Araroa Trust, it is recommended that Council provide a copy of this report outlining how Whangarei could better slot into The Long Pathway.

## **4 Walkway Issues**

### **4.1 Multiple Agencies Involvement**

Approximately 75% of the main coastal walkway route is on Whangarei District Council land. The rest of the main route that has been mapped by this study crosses land administered by the Department of Conservation.

Clearly the viability of the creating a continuous connection across the study area is dependent upon the permission of the Department, particularly since DOC owns much of the land which the recommended main route traverses at Ruakaka Beach dunefields, Bream Head, and Ocean Beach sections of the walkway, along with the northern destination at Mimiwhangata.

A number of issues need to be considered when negotiating how best to cross DOC land along the route. These matters may include the role of that land within the Department's management strategy; potential impact upon any ecological, archaeological or spiritual values that may have been identified; responsibility for the wellbeing of users; which organisation will fund, construct, and maintain a walkway facility; and the relative roles that Council and the Department could play in the overall system.

The Whananaki - Sandy Bay walkway is an example of a coastal walkway that exists on a 'paper road' vested in the Whangarei District Council but is managed by the Department of Conservation.

Ongoing dialogue with the Department of Conservation will therefore be critical.

## 4.2 Maori Cultural Issues

Traditional Maori culture and values are closely linked to the environment and are concerned for the quality and condition of areas and places of significance to them. It is these areas that are their waahi taonga, an all embracing term including waahi tapu and mahinga kai. Of particular concern is the need to protect waahi tapu from desecration through indiscriminate development.

In addition to specific places of significance, archaeological sites may include signs of Maori occupation within the District, such as middens, ovens and caves. Archaeological sites are a connection to past generations and are sources of information on their activities.

Water bodies are of social, cultural and spiritual value to Maori and contain resources important for their well-being. Water bodies are areas of mahinga kai, which provide an important source of the traditional food of the Maori, such as the tuna (eel), kawai (freshwater crayfish), which is central to their economic, spiritual, and cultural well-being. It is important to Maori that tangata whenua access to these traditional food resources is maintained.

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, which the Council must take into account (pursuant to Section 8 of the Resource Management Act 1991), include active protection of taonga as a mechanism to enable hapu and Iwi to exercise rangatiratanga over their resources. Section 6(e) of the Resource Management Act 1991 requires the recognition and provision for the relationship of Maori people with their taonga.

In addition the Department of Conservation as agents for the Crown are subject to specific legal obligations in terms of their relationship with Maori as set out in the in the Conservation Act 1991

Walkway development must recognise the legal imperatives of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Conservation Act in respect to the relationship of Maori with the natural and physical resources of the coastal environment.

No consultation has taken place with Maori during the preparation of this scoping study, but early liaison with relevant groups will be vital during coming phases of more detailed planning.

## 4.3 Neighbour's Privacy and Amenity Values

The development of public access to the coast can adversely impact on the privacy and seclusion provided by many coastal properties. These amenity values typically make a significant contribution to the monetary value of coastal land and are also typically jealously guarded by owners of private property. Development of public areas that have traditionally been used only by local property owners, such as unformed roads, may bring a backlash from those nearby owners. Some provision may need to be made to conserve the privacy of neighbouring land when undertaking detailed design of the walkway.

## 4.4 Safety and Liability

Whilst walking may appear to be a relatively passive and risk-free activity, there are a number of safety considerations that need to be highlighted to potential users and mitigated wherever possible in the way that a walkway is designed. Natural factors include such dangers as cliffs, crevasses, and surging waves on the open coast, or strong currents in estuaries and bogs that could entrap someone venturing off of the track. These matters can be addressed with track placement, handrails and accompanying safety literature.

Another range of potentially hazardous factors are associated with farming activities in areas which are grazed. These could include operational activities such as machinery working on a farm, vehicles on tracks, or electric fences. Stock may also present a hazard, especially bulls or animals with young offspring to protect. Typically these issues can be incorporated into a farm's management regime, so that potentially dangerous animals or activities are kept out of contact with areas of public access. In circumstances where a farmer is unable to keep dangerous stock away from a public access, it may be necessary to fence both sides of the legal access, although this solution should be reserved to be a last resort.

The Health and Safety in Employment (HSE) Act 1992 sets out the liability faced by farmers for members of the public using their land (and arguably any public road passing through the farm which are subject to the farmer's activities). Descriptive information about the Act indicates that farmers have a duty to warn any authorised visitors who have gained express permission to access the land about any significant, out of the ordinary work-related hazards that the farmer knows about. A full duty to take all practicable steps to ensure that people are not harmed applies when people pay to use the land for any purpose.

Some farm owners and forestry companies place a notice at the gate to their property setting out any hazards which people may encounter when crossing the land.

A copy of a brochure entitled "Am I Liable ?", describing the issues associated with HSE legislation, forms Appendix 2 to this report. Legal advice on health and safety issues should be sought when detailed work commences upon parts of the route that crossed farmed land.

Road safety is another broad issue that is of particular relevance to the coastal route suggested. Many parts of the walkway are confined to the corridor of a formed road by various constraints on more desirable routes. Often coastal road corridors run through quite steep terrain, with roads that are narrow and winding in response to landform. The road reserve is frequently fully occupied by the road platform and a cut and fill batter either side of the road. Poor sightlines and limited road formation width mean that introducing pedestrians to the existing road without a separated walkway is potentially very dangerous. Road crossings for walkway users are another potential source of hazard and need to be fully

considered. Future detailed design of roadside walkways needs to recognise these areas of potential danger.

## **4.5 District Planning**

### **4.5.1 Transitional District Plan**

The Whangarei Transitional Plan comprises three sections carried over from the local government arrangements prior to amalgamation in 1989:

- Whangarei City Plan – prepared under the former Town and Country Planning Act 1977 but approved under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Whangarei County Plan – prepared under the former Town and Country Planning Act 1977
- Hikurangi Town Plan – prepared under the Resource Management Act 1997

The study area is subject to the provisions of the Whangarei District Transitional Plan (Whangarei County Section). The 'County Plan' is one of the oldest in the country having been, originally approved in 1987 as a District Scheme which was 'rolled over' from its predecessor which had been made operative in 1979.

The Rural A, Rural AC, Rural Scenic Protection, Coastal (Residential), Coastal (Rural Residential) zones of the Transitional District Plan apply to the coastal strip.

### **4.5.2 Proposed District Plan**

On 19 September 1998, the Whangarei District Council publicly notified a Proposed District Plan for the Whangarei District prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991. The closing date for submissions and further submissions was 17 September 1999. On 6 June 2001 the Whangarei District Council will be releasing its decisions on submissions received to the Proposed District Plan.

#### **4.5.2.1 Environments**

The Countryside, Coastal Countryside, Living 1, Living 3 'Environments' of the Proposed District Plan apply to the coastal strip.

#### **4.5.2.2 Resource Areas**

The Notable Landscape Areas, Outstanding Landscape Areas, Significant Ecological Sites, Coastal Hazard Areas, Flood Susceptible Areas 'Resource Areas' of the Proposed District Plan apply to the coastal strip.

#### **4.5.2.3 Designations**

The following 'Designations' of the Proposed District Plan apply to the coastal strip related to the indicated primary route:

Designation	Description of Site	Location	P.D.P Map
DW 22	Transfer Station/Recycling Pickup	Waipu	19
7DW 102	Proposed public reserve	Moureeses Bay	24
DT 17	Land uses for telecommunications and radiocommunication purposes including telephone exchange.	Whananaki	25
DE 56	Whananaki Primary School	Whananaki	25
DW 103	Proposed Public Reserve	Woolleys Bay	26B
DW 104	Proposed Public Reserve	Woolleys Bay	27
DW 105	Proposed Public Reserve	Matapouri	27
DW 106	Proposed Public Reserve	Matapouri	27
DW 108	Proposed Public Reserve	Ngunguru	30
DW 109	Proposed Public Reserve	Pataua South	32A
DW 110	Proposed Public Reserve	Pataua South	32A
DW 113	Proposed Public Reserve	One Tree Point	51
DW 114	Proposed Public Reserve	One Tree Point	51
DW 115	Proposed Public Reserve	One Tree Point	51
DW 121	Proposed Public Reserve	Taurikura Bay	53
DW 122	Proposed Public Reserve	Taurikura Bay	53
DW 115	Proposed Public Reserve	Marsden Bay	54
DW 116	Proposed Public Reserve	Ruakaka	57
DW 119	Proposed Public Reserve	Waipu Cove	59 and 60
DW 120	Proposed Public Reserve	Langs Beach	60
DW 111	Proposed Public Reserve	Ocean Beach	62C

#### 4.5.2.4 Sites of Significance to Maori

The following 'Sites of Significance to Maori' of the Proposed District Plan apply to the coastal strip related to the indicated main route:

Site No.	Description of Site	Location	P.D.P Map
34	Historic Places (Pits and Terraces)	Parapaea Bay	3
75	Ngunguru Sandspit includes midden, battle field, burial place and pa site	Ngunguru Sandspit	8 and 30
56	Historic Place (Pa with middens)	Horahora	13
2	Historic Place (Pa Site)	Kauri Mountain	16
50	Historic Place (Pa Site)	Tauwhera	24
35	Maori Burial Ground	Whangaruru South	26A
51	Historic Place (Pa Site)	Woolleys Bay	27
52	Historic Place (Pa Site)	Matapouri Bay	27
38	Burial Reserve	Ngunguru Sandspit	30
42	Historic Place (Pa with midden)	Taihururu	32B
43	Historic Place (Pa Site)	Taihururu	32B

#### 4.5.2.5 Esplanade Reserve Priority Areas

The Proposed District Plan contains rules that address the appropriate width, purpose and location of esplanade reserves or strips.

An 'Esplanade Reserve Priority Area' applies to the whole of the coastal strip related to the indicated main route.

## 4.6 Whangarei District Council Open Space Strategy (Draft)

Submissions to the Draft Open Space Strategy are being reviewed at the time that this walkway scoping study is being completed. Whilst the Strategy has not been formally adopted by Council, the directions provided by the draft document emphasise the importance of walkway linkages generally and the particular importance that may be placed on coastal walking connections.



As the Open Space Strategy will be finalised after this walkway scoping study there is scope for the findings of this report to be incorporated into the open space concept and implementation / development projects sections of the Open Space Strategy.

## **4.7 Ownership and Legal Access**

### **4.7.1 Legal/Ownership Constraints to Walkway Development**

The development of walkways is typically constrained by the ownership and legal status of the land over which the walkway is proposed to pass. Walkway access can be obtained over both “public” and “private” land. In recognition of the focus of this study upon crossing only publicly-owned land, the private ownership categories that are presented below are for general background only.

#### **4.7.1.1 Public Land**

The primary owners of “public” land suitable for walkways are the Whangarei District Council and the Department of Conservation. The Northland Regional Council does not have any land holdings of relevance to the coastal strip.

Land owned by the Whangarei District Council generally falls into four categories:

- Road – Land held as legal road (formed and unformed)
- Reserves – Land held as reserve in the Reserves Act 1977.
- Freehold – Land held in fee simple as a result of land purchase vesting or transfer (e.g. from the Northland Harbour Company as a result of the local government reorganisation).
- Other Land – held under specific legislation for service delivery purposes (such as water supply).

Land administered by the Department of Conservation falls into two types:

- Land held as reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.
- Land held under the Conservation Act as a result of reclassification of ownership status from former legislation (e.g. Lands Act 1908).

#### **4.7.1.2 Private Land**

The owners of “private” land that may be suitable for walkways are of three types:

- Private – freehold to private persons and/or corporate bodies.
- Maori – multiply owned or Maori reserves.
- Government – land held by Government Departments (not Department of Conservation) or SOE's.

Each land ownership category presents different opportunities and constraints in terms of ownership and/or legal structures for walkway developments shown in the following table:

Ownership Category	Opportunities	Constraints
Whangarei District Council - Reserves Land	Generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some classifications may not be legally suitable for access (e.g. water supply).</li> <li>• Existing Management Plans may restrict access.</li> <li>• Lease arrangements with other parties may preclude access.</li> </ul>
Whangarei District Council - Roads Land	Available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be identified as a surplus asset for disposal.</li> <li>• May be required for road construction or other access needs.</li> </ul>
Whangarei District Council - Freehold Land	Not generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lease arrangements with other parties may preclude access.</li> <li>• May be identified for a commercial purpose not suitable for general public access.</li> <li>• May be identified as a surplus asset for disposal.</li> </ul>
Whangarei District Council - Other Land	Not generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be held for service delivery operational purposes.</li> <li>• May be identified as surplus asset for disposal.</li> </ul>
Department of Conservation - Reserves Act Land	Generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some classifications may not be legally suitable for access (e.g. ecological).</li> </ul>
Department of Conservation - Conservation Act Land	Generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some classifications may not be legally suitable for access (e.g. ecological).</li> </ul>
Private Freehold Land	Not generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible "grace and favor" access arrangements.</li> <li>• May require easement or registered walkway, under the Walkways Act.</li> </ul>
Maori Land	Not generally available to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible "grace and favor" access arrangements</li> <li>• May require easement</li> <li>• Ownership classification may preclude public access (e.g. Maori cemetery)</li> </ul>
Government (Crown)	Not generally available to the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership status may</li> </ul>

Land	public.	preclude public access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be identified as a surplus asset for disposal</li> </ul>
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#### 4.7.2 Opportunities to Overcome Legal/Ownership Constraints where Land is not Publicly Owned

There may be circumstances where land owners are prepared to allow walkers to pass across their property where this will offer people an enhanced route. In these circumstances the primary means of overcoming legal/ownership constraints to walkway development on private land are:

- Acquisition of private land through purchase by Whangarei District Council or Department of Conservation in a willing buyer, willing seller situation.
- Change in ownership of private land by vesting land as reserve by condition(s) on an approved subdivision.
- Change in classification of ownership and/or management of Whangarei District Council or Department of Conservation land.
- Legally established walkway or easement over private land.
- Legally established walkway or easement over Maori land.
- Informal “grace and favor” access arrangements, whilst recognising that such casual agreements are vulnerable to a change of heart by the land owner and therefore make dependent portions of the trail susceptible to being withdrawn from public access.

#### 4.7.3 Unformed Legal Roads

Unformed legal roads<sup>6</sup> are usually physically undefined legal accessways of public land, often in rural areas. They were often included on historical survey plans to be roads, but for various reasons have never been formed. They are legal public reserves where the user has all the rights of a formed legal road, unless a bylaw is formulated to regulate use. Thus, dogs are allowed, as are mountain bikes, motor bikes, four wheel drive vehicles and horses, provided that they remain within the road boundaries. The use of firearms is not permitted on formed or unformed legal roads. Remaining within the legal road boundaries can be a problem if they are poorly delineated, which is frequently the case.

Traditionally, property owners, such as farmers, have used unformed roads for grazing. This is appropriate, but legally the farmer cannot prevent someone using the roadway, nor should they fence across the road. Gates are acceptable following consultation with the local authority, provided that they are not locked. Stiles in fences across legal roads have been accepted as an appropriate compromise at times.

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<sup>6</sup> Also known as ‘Paper roads’. Unformed legal road is the correct legal term.

Cadastral maps show unformed legal roads. Some unformed legal roads provide useful access to rivers, to reserves, or between formed roads. Others serve no useful purpose, in that they do not link areas, nor do they access anywhere in particular and often end in the middle of a paddock. The placement of unformed legal roads in the past did not necessarily take into account the underlying landforms. Many follow a straight line, up, down or across hills, and do not respond to the natural contours of the land.

Unformed legal roads are sometimes developed as formed roads to meet public pressure, Council needs or new subdivision. In some circumstances an unformed road on one part of a property can be traded to create a corridor, desirably publicly owned, in a part of the property that is more suitable as a walkway route. These negotiated walkways often have restrictions to use added as part of the negotiated package, such as no dogs or mountain bikes. No restrictions can be placed on the use of unformed legal roads, however. Another drawback for the landowner whose land is traversed by an unformed road is that unless the unformed legal road is then stopped<sup>7</sup>, anyone can still use the unformed legal road (if they know where it is), as well as the negotiated access. This can be resolved somewhat by stopping the unformed legal road<sup>8</sup>, but this should only be undertaken if the negotiated access has security of tenure such as an easement or other permanent agreement. Further, stopping an unformed legal road is expensive, requiring survey and application to the Council. The cost is borne by the landowner, but is often greater than the value of the land involved. However, there can be long term benefits of stopping roads for land owners including that there will be no rights of access by the public, dogs or vehicles.

Unformed legal roads can be closed (temporarily) for any reason that the local authority considers desirable, provided that the statutory process of the Local Government Act 1974 is followed. Reasons could include public safety during farming operations, fire prevention and lambing or calving. Applications for stopping (permanently) an unformed legal road are also considered by Council. Council can consider any amenity issues in road stopping applications. Relevant issues include: the location and placement of the unformed legal road in relation to other recreation opportunities; and actual or potential future use and value (related to whether the unformed legal road joins two public roads or reserves).

Unformed legal roads are useful in either directly providing public access opportunities which can be developed into walkways, or they can be used as a negotiating tool, such as an agreement to stop an unformed legal road in return for permanent securing of alternative access. Unformed legal roads can also provide for environmental and conservation benefits, where they may offer a corridor of public land which may have significant fauna or flora. With several key sections of the proposed main route for the coastal walkway being dependent upon the use of unformed road, it is critical that Council does not

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<sup>7</sup> The terms 'stopped' and 'closed' are used to denote permanent and temporary closure of roads. Stopped is a permanently closed road, while people are only temporarily prohibited from using a closed road.

<sup>8</sup> Unformed legal roads can be stopped or closed by following a process laid out in the Local Government Act 1974.

stop portions of road or dispose of other public estate without first checking what effects this action will have on the integrity of the proposed walkway system or potential links to the system (along with a range of other peripheral considerations). Internal Council processes related to stopping legal roads therefore need to include reference to this document.

#### 4.7.4 Pleasure of Land Owner Walkways

Unformed legal roads and walkways on vested reserves are not the only issues with track legalities. Access may also be negotiated across private land that has been volunteered by its owners for which there is no formal agreement. Walkways founded on such informal arrangements are particularly vulnerable to changes in attitude to use by the landowner or change of land ownership.

It is not uncommon for land owners to be irritated by the behaviour of walkway users - cars are parked inconsiderately, dogs are allowed to chase sheep, gates left open (or closed when meant to be open), litter dropped and visitors may not respect the rights and privacy of the land owner. Fears about security on the part of the land owner can also be influential. The walkways which can to be used 'at the pleasure of the land owner' are most at risk of closure through poor visitor behaviour. The price of the loss of access includes both the effect on the overall integrity of the walkway system and any capital works invested in developing the walkway.

Securing permanent and legal access over private land requires time, resources and willing parties. Ideally, 'at the pleasure of the land owner' tracks are secured with legal easements. Negotiating these could require cash payments, annual rentals or per visitor payment, payment of legal fees and substantial time. Alternatively other incentives such as rates relief may be useful in achieving a constructive outcome.

### 4.8 Opportunities to Enable Access

#### 4.8.1 Esplanade Reserves and Strips

##### 4.8.1.1 Legal Aspects

Sections 229 to 237H of the Resource Management Act 1991 make provision for the creation of esplanade reserves, esplanade strips, and access strips on the subdivision of land.

The purposes of esplanade reserves and esplanade strips are specified in s 229 as follows:

*229. Purposes of esplanade reserves and esplanade strips—*

*An esplanade reserve or an esplanade strip has one or more of the following purposes:*

- (a) To contribute to the protection of conservation values by, in particular,—*
- (i) Maintaining or enhancing the natural functioning of the adjacent sea, river, or lake; or*
  - (ii) Maintaining or enhancing water quality; or*
  - (iii) Maintaining or enhancing aquatic habitats; or*
  - (iv) Protecting the natural values associated with the esplanade reserve or esplanade strip; or*
  - (v) Mitigating natural hazards; or*
- (b) To enable public access to or along any sea, river, or lake; or*
- (c) To enable public recreational use of the esplanade reserve or esplanade strip and adjacent sea, river, or lake, where the use is compatible with conservation values.*

Section 230 of the Act distinguishes between allotments of less than 4 ha and those of 4 ha or more. In the former situation, an esplanade reserve 20 m in width is required to be set aside from the allotment along the mark of mean high water springs of the sea and along the bank of any river or any lake, except where there is a rule to the contrary in the district plan or where a condition of a resource consent has waived or reduced the width of the esplanade reserve.

In the case of allotments over 4 ha, an esplanade reserve or strip is only required if there is a relevant rule in the district plan but even in that situation, a condition of a resource consent can waive or reduce the width of that esplanade reserve or strip.

An esplanade strip must be of a width specified in a rule in a district plan and is created by registration of an instrument entered into between the territorial authority and the subdividing owner.

Unlike an esplanade reserve, an esplanade strip has a boundary which moves simultaneously with every alteration of the mark of mean high water springs or the bank of any river or margin of a lake as the case may be.

Apart from the situation where esplanade strips are required by the district plan, they may also be created by agreement.

The role of an esplanade strip will vary depending upon the purpose for which the esplanade strip has been created. For instance, the function of an esplanade strip created for protection of conservation values is quite different to that of one that is created for public access or public recreational use purposes.

The Act makes provision for compensation upon the vesting of esplanade reserves in respect of allotments of less than 4 ha, where an esplanade reserve or strip of greater than 20 m in width is required to be set aside. In the case of esplanade reserves or esplanade strips on allotments of 4 ha or more, compensation is payable irrespective of width, unless the registered proprietor agrees otherwise.

Similarly, compensation is payable where land is vested in accordance with s 237A, and where the land adjoins, or would adjoin if it were not for an esplanade reserve, any allotment of 4 ha or more created when the land is subdivided.

## **4.9 Marsden Point**

Two key approvals and plans are relevant to the possible development of coastal walkways in the Marsden Point area.

### **4.9.1 Marsden Point Bulk Cargo Port**

For operational reasons, the Bulk Cargo Port currently under construction at Marsden Point will effectively preclude public access along the foreshore between the existing Oil Refinery and Blacksmith Creek. Whilst it is likely that pedestrian links will need to be made using the road network in the area, there may be some opportunity to utilise land alongside a drainage channel running north to south across the site.

### **4.9.2 Marsden Point- Ruakaka Structure Plan**

On November 2000 the Whangarei District Council adopted a Structure Plan for the Marsden Point-Ruakaka area. The Structure Plan does not contain any reference to coastal walkway links in the area. Section 4.25 - Open Space - addresses proposals to create open space areas at a macro level.

## **5 Potential Walkway Route**

The following descriptions provide a summary of the route, broken into thirteen sections, each of which would take 3-6 walking hours to complete. The alphabetical sequence of sections listed relates to the geographic sequence from south to north and does not imply any form of priority for implementation. Maps A-M in Appendix 3 provide an illustrated guide to the route, whilst the route data sheets in Appendix 4 offer more detailed statistics on each section.

### **5.1 Section 1 – Langs Beach to Waipu township (maps A and B)**

The walkway begins on Cove Road at the edge of the Lang Cove subdivision, where the first staging place offers toilets and informal parking. From here the

main route follows Cove Road, or the beach, to the northern end of the beach. The road corridor is relatively narrow and winding at the southern end, so constructing a permanent walkway would be challenging.

From the northern edge of the beach the route would follow a system of esplanade strips and coastal reserves to the northern edge of the settlement. This portion of the walkway is one of the most diverse and appealing of the entire route. The first part sidles along the edge of residential sections at the top of the cliff. Pohutukawa and other coastal vegetation are abundant. In addition to a number of small bridges likely to be required to span gulches in the cliffs, safety rails would be required for this portion of the path.

The route then follows the coastal edge past an area of very distinctive stacked limestone formations. An existing track provides some access to this part of the coast, but it is poorly marked and constructed. Moving north, the route would then head a small distance inland, where a natural bench winds through quite an extensive area of pohutukawa forest. The esplanade reserve strip finishes on the northern edge of the settlement, forcing the walkway route back up to follow Cove Road, which it does until reaching a point some 1.5km north of Waipu Cove. Giving effect to designations along the coastal edge would allow the route to follow the shore all the way from Langs Beach to Waipu Cove which would be considerably more desirable than following a roadside route over the narrow, winding road that runs over the hill to the Cove.

On the flats after leaving Waipu Cove the issue becomes one of traffic speed and limited interest for walkers as they follow the road verge across the coastal flats. An alternative beach walk from Waipu Cove is not recommended due to the ecological sensitivity of the DoC wildlife reserve at the end of the spit, and the difficulty posed by either crossing the Waipu River or skirting private land to get to upstream crossing points.

At a point 1.5km north of Waipu Cove an unformed road reaches out to the western edge of the tidal lagoon. From here the main route follows the lagoon edge on a mix of esplanade reserve and unformed road. A small section of privately owned land would need to be skirted with a boardwalk. Near the mouth of the Waipu River the route then returns inland alongside Johnson Point Road. The route continues alongside Cove Road back to the second staging place at Waipu township - restricted from crossing Waipu River nearer the mouth by a combination of discontinuous system of public road or esplanade corridor, the width of the river crossing and habitat values near the river mouth. Previous comments about vehicle speed and uninteresting roadside amenity apply also to this section of the route.

Side routes at the beginning of the section access Anderson Cove on the coast, or follow Cove Road to the south to connect with the Brynderwyn Hills Walkway. Further investigations may reveal potential to also connect with DoC's other local path, the Mangawhai Cliffs Walkway which would then provide a link as far south as Mangawhai.



## 5.2 Section 2 – Waipu township to Ruakaka (maps B and C)

As the second staging place, Waipu offers good parking, ablutions and various shopping facilities. After leaving Waipu alongside Nova Scotia Drive (formerly SH1) the route soon arrives at its first obstacle – the road bridge across the Waipu River. A free standing or clip-on pedestrian bridge around 120m long would be required to provide safe crossing for walkers. Beyond the bridge the route continues beside Nova Scotia Drive until branching north into Uretiti Road. Some distance on the path would turn right into Tip Road which would deliver walkers back to the edge of the sea.

A continuous belt of DoC reserve stretches north across the dunes to Ruakaka. A track exists through the dune area, worn by a combination of horses, vehicles and walkers. The firm sands and fine views from the nearby beach are likely to ensure that most users of the walkway would follow the beach in preference to the dune route. Development costs for either option would be negligible.

## 5.3 Section 3 – Ruakaka to One Tree Point (maps C and D)

From the staging place near the Ruakaka Surf Lifesaving Club, the main route skirts the southern shore of the Ruakaka River. After rounding the peninsula occupied by the Ruakaka Motor Camp, the main route would cross a boardwalk spanning a shallow inlet separating the motor camp from Princess Road. It would then divert up to follow Marsden Point Road for a short distance.

An alternative to heading inland toward Marsden Point Road would be to bridge the river a little upstream of its mouth to avoid disturbing a wildlife reserve on the northern side of the mouth. This alternate route would then follow DoC reserves through the dunefields to the oil refinery.

From Marsden Point Road the main walkway would drop back down to the western bank of the Ruakaka River, which it would follow up to a reserve connection linking Peter Snell Drive. A bridge over the river would be needed midway along this section of the walk.

Continuing along the verge of Peter Snell Drive, the route would meet DoC reserve adjacent to the racing club. Having reached the open coast, the main route would then reach Marsden Point via existing tracks through the DoC's dunefield reserves or follow the beach. The same options would take walkers around the point to the Northland Port Corporation deepwater port development, although it is likely that this will have value only as a side route in the near future. Operational constraints are likely to preclude public access along the foreshore between the existing Oil Refinery and Blacksmith Creek. Pedestrian links will probably need to be made using the road network in the area, although there may be some opportunity to incorporate pedestrian access into a service corridor running across the site.

After negotiating the port development area the route would then use a combination of esplanade reserves and the verges of One Tree Point Road to reach the fourth staging place at One Tree Point. A side route continues on

around the esplanade reserve from the staging point to take walkers to the western edge of the settlement.

Parts of the route around Ruakaka and One Tree Point are expected to add considerably to the amenity of local people as well as contributing to the overall system.

#### **5.4 Section 4 – Town Basin to Onerahi (map E)**

This leg of the route forms a second “prong” to the overall system by allowing walkers to access the Whangarei Heads and choose between heading south to Langs Beach or north to Mimiwhangata via Ocean Beach.

Positioning the staging place near the town basin utilises parking on Hatea Drive or adjacent to the council’s swimming baths, and proximity to the range of shops and amenities in the city.

This section is somewhat different to the majority of the coastal walkway route, in that it links one of the city’s major suburbs with the commercial centre. The relatively short distance between Onerahi and Whangarei means that this section has considerable potential as a walking and cycling connection for a large number of people on a daily basis. The alignment of the route and the types of walkway surfaces outlined in Appendix 4 reflect that importance. This includes the suggestion that paths and boardwalks be constructed to a width and standard for use as a dual cycleway / walkway, including replacement of existing narrow paths where necessary.

The route commences by following an existing path to just beyond Dundas Drive. From this point there is scope to continue along the river edge by utilising Council reserves currently used for boat hardstand or workshop yards. The route would rejoin Riverside Drive at the reserve near Ray Roberts Marine. The main route then follows alongside Riverside Drive, whilst an alternate route would allow walkers with more time to meander along the water’s edge on the perimeter of William Fraser Park. Side routes include links to the Parahaki Reserve and countryside around Old Parua Bay Road and Awaroa Creek.

With the restricted width of the Riverside Drive causeway to the east and west of Kissing Point, it is suggested that the main route be upon a generous boardwalk weaving through the mangroves and saltmarsh.

Upon reaching the Onerahi peninsula the route then follows Waimahanga Road to join the Waimahanga Walkway. The path would then continue along the old railway alignment to join Beach Road. The first part of Beach Road has a grassed margin to its seaward side and the walkway / cycleway would meander through that verge. Heading south from the sailing club, the road is constructed atop a seawall for much of its length, and it is proposed that the cycleway / walkway be allocated some of the road space and that vehicles be restricted to a narrower lane, rather like a “slow street”.

More generous coastal reserve space around Stevens Point allows the route to once again leave the road and travel alongside the water.

A staging place is indicated at the corner of Beach Road and Whangarei Heads Road where there is space to park on the road verge, but this could equally be positioned just up the hill at the Onerahi shopping centre.

## 5.5 Section 5 – Onerahi to Parua Bay (maps E and F)

Heading east from the end of Beach Road alongside Whangarei Heads Road, the walkway would soon have to resort to a boardwalk of some length along the edge of the marine area, because the road embankment offers no space for constructing a path. Dry land would be regained opposite Grahamtown Road, where the path would follow a Council-owned floodbank.

After rejoining the road corridor near Edwards Road, the route would utilise space by the road platform where possible. Headlands either side of Waikaraka push the road onto a seawall and small structures would be needed to take the path around these points. After reaching Waikaraka the route would link back to the coastal esplanade strip and follow a combination of reserve and road verge to Tamaterau.

Difficulties in achieving a practicable, all-tide route around Manganese Point (although this section is retained as an alternate route) dictate that the main route runs up a valley alongside the Heads Road to re-emerge alongside the road near Scott Road. The route would then follow the road verge through to the next staging point at the boat storage and launching reclamation at Parua Bay.

Although not likely to be as well used as the Onerahi – Town Basin section of the route, the link out to Parua Bay is expected to have quite heavy use by commuting cyclists and local walkers, so a higher level of development is proposed than would be justified for more remote sections.

## 5.6 Section 6 – Parua Bay to McLeod Bay (map G)

The Parua Bay launching reclamation is well suited as a staging place, offering as it does abundant parking, toilets, a shop and a tavern for thirsty walkers.

Almost opposite the tavern, the route crosses Whangarei Heads Road to follow Crisp Road. This short diversion leads to an abandoned causeway across the tidal section of Kohinui Stream, bypassing the narrow causeway fully occupied by the present alignment of Whangarei Heads Road. The route then follows the corridor of the Heads Road, fitted as best as possible within steep terrain, until it meets the western edge of Parua Bay settlement a little uphill from the local community centre.

Here a right of way on the left hand side of the road leads to a Council bush reserve which drops down to the water's edge at the end of Ritchie Road. After running along the quite lower section of Ritchie Road for a short distance, the main route rejoins the waters edge along an esplanade. Other than a short section of privately owned frontage that can be passed at all but spring tide, the route up to Kiteone Road follows reserve land.

From Kiteone Road the route then joins Whangarei Heads Road, which it follows as far as the next staging place at McLeod Bay. The inland part of this section is rather mundane and the Heads Road is quite busy with fast-moving traffic. A low tide alternative to bypass some of this rather uninspiring part of the route is to drop down Nook Road and walk the shoreline to McLeod Bay, although this option would only be useful at half tide or less.

Upon reaching McLeod Bay the main route would follow either existing roadside footpaths or along narrow esplanade areas. Side routes at this end of the section make connections with Mount Manaia and the associated ridgeline running back to Craig Road.

McLeod Bay wharf is noted as the most suitable ferry or water taxi landing site to connect with section 3 of the route which defines the end of the southern route at One Tree Point.

## **5.7 Section 7 –McLeod Bay to Urquharts Bay (maps G and H)**

After leaving McLeod Bay the main route skirts the shoreline of Mount Aubrey on DoC and Council reserves en route to Reotahi and Little Munroe Bay. The first part of this existing route – running around to Reotahi - has been improved recently but would benefit from a more intensive upgrade. The ruins of the old freezing works and interesting rock formations of Reotahi are just two facets that make this section particularly interesting and worthy of interpretation signs.

An alternate route could follow the intertidal shore for the short portion of this section where private ownership runs down to the sea, whilst a side route could connect with a track over Mount Aubrey via Tiller Park.

From Little Munroe Bay, the route follows the steep access road up to Whangarei Heads Road, which it then follows all the way out to Urquharts Bay. The route is difficult due to a very narrow and winding road corridor with limited scope for benching a path. Numerous structures are likely to be required to achieve a safe and user-friendly route along this section.

Side routes include links to Mount Manaia ridgeline and Ocean Beach via Robinson Road.

Ferry landing option for connection with the southern coastal walkway are the Taurikura jetty (in need of some repair) and the Urquhart Bay wharf.

## 5.8 Section 8 –Urquharts Bay to Ocean Beach (map H)

From Urquharts Bay the route follows existing Department of Conservation tracks through the Bream Head area. The first portion passes Home Point, with its gun emplacement, and Busby Head at the very mouth of the harbour. After taking walkers across the shores of Smugglers Bay, the route then tackles a rugged traverse of the spine of the head landform to emerge at the Ocean Beach lighthouse. From there it drops to the Ocean Beach staging place at the toilets and carpark at the end of Ranui Road.

Alternate routes offered are essentially shortcuts on this most demanding section of the overall walkway route. The first is a direct link between the Urquharts Bay carpark and Smugglers Bay. The other follows the existing route from Ocean Beach Road to the ridge on the Peach Cove track. This would cut out the loop (and dramatic views) that go with the main route as it passes the lighthouse.

Two considerations may ultimately justify a different main track alignment for this part of the route, such as a low level track that sidles along the more gentle contour of the lower northern boundary of the reserve and an associated unformed road. Such an alignment would be less taxing for elderly or unfit walkers than the present ridge track.

It may also be more suitable to meet management objectives for a “mainland island” reserve for Bream Head that is presently in the early stages of planning. Close liaison with the project managers for this initiative will be important in achieving the goals of the mainland island whilst maximising the value of the coastal walkway in this part of the coast.

## 5.9 Section 9 – Ocean Beach to Kauri Mountain (map H)

Commencing from the Ocean Beach carpark, the main route follows the backshore area along Ocean Beach. It then crosses a narrow saddle and skirts a steep headland (all privately owned but designated as Proposed Public Reserve) before descending to an expansive open beach that extends north to Kauri Mountain. The main route runs along the inland edge of the sand dune reserve (DOC estate) for the length of this beach, crossing a small bridge to emerge at the end of the section at a road reserve crossing farmland to connect with the formed end of Kauri Mountain Road.

A secondary route simply follows the beach and it is likely that this would be favoured by walkers except at rare times when a combination of the foredune having been cut out by storms and the tide being full, when the beach could not be used.

Side routes offer links with the Manaia range from the middle of this section.

## 5.10 Section 10 – Kauri Mountain to Pataua (map I)

Upon leaving Kauri Mountain Beach, this section ascends unformed roads to skirt DOC reserve on Kauri Mountain. The route runs past the apex of Kauri Mountain

and provides excellent views up and down the coast. From the peak of the mountain, the walkway would then descend down paper roads and the formed Harambee Road to Taiharuru Road. After crossing Taiharuru Road the route then skirts the upper Taiharuru River by an established esplanade reserve. A relatively short bridge crossing of the upper stream channel brings the route to another esplanade reserve on the northern shore. After following this reserve for about 700m, the walkway connects with a road reserve linking the shore with Beasley Road. From here the route then follows a combination of formed and unformed road to reach the end of the section at the footbridge crossing the Pataua estuary.

An attractive one way side route runs north from the end of Harambee Road to the mouth of the Taiharuru River, via a system of formed and unformed roads.

### **5.11 Section 11 – Pataua to Ngunguru (map J)**

The first part of this section follows the formed road from Pataua to the Horahora River. For parts of this route the road platform is narrow and winding, so detailed design would need to establish a safer pedestrian path within the road corridor.

The Horahora River presents the first major crossing obstacle on the route, with a channel over 100m wide to get across. Section 6.2 of this report discusses crossing options. In the absence of a crossing over the Horahora River, walkers would need to follow the predominantly narrow and winding Pataua North Road back to Glenbervie to meet the Ngunguru Road.

From the northern bank of the Horahora River, a paper road passes through areas of wetland and manuka shrubland, passing the formed end of Ngunguru Ford Road before dropping to the southern shore of the Ngunguru River.

Crossing the 200m+ wide Ngunguru River is arguably the most daunting challenge to forming a coastal walkway linkage that hugs the eastern edge of the District. Crossing options are set out in section 6.2.

If a crossing of the Horahora River was to be organised without also crossing the Ngunguru River, a 17km diversion inland along Ngunguru Ford Road (narrow and winding) and back out to the coast along Ngunguru Road would have to be followed.

A secondary route for part of this section could follow Parauawanui Beach and the southern shore of the Horahora River to the Pataua North Road. Privately owned titles with riparian rights preclude access above Mean High Water Springs, and a series of rocky headlands mean that this route can only be passed at lower parts of the tide. In the absence of these obstacles, this secondary route would be preferred over the roadside alignment suggested as the main route.

## 5.12 Section 12 – Ngunguru to Matapouri (map K)

Various ownership and terrain obstacles have led to the main route for this section following the Ngunguru Road / Matapouri Road corridor all the way to Matapouri. Parts of the road are steep and winding and not suited to pedestrian use. Creating a necessary separated pedestrian walkway along parts of this road corridor will be technically challenging and costly.

A relatively short pedestrian bridge will be needed to cross the river upon entering Matapouri.

Side routes include a connection with DOC's walkway to Tutukaka Head, and a possible loop track around a DOC reserve on the southern edge of Matapouri.

## 5.13 Section 13 – Matapouri to Whananaki (map L)

After leaving Matapouri settlement on the foreshore esplanade, this section skirts Rangitapu Point and Whale Bay to reach Woolleys Bay. From here the route continues to hug the coast along esplanade strips and unformed road. Some of the terrain is rugged and would require specially designed structures.

Upon reaching Sandy Bay, the route then connects with Whananaki walkway. The main route is shown as following an unformed road inland of the existing walkway alignment, because the unformed road used by the present path is broken by a small segment of privately owned land. Following the present route would be preferable if access over this small stretch of private title is formalised.

After reaching Whananaki South, the route passes across esplanade and unformed road to reach an existing footbridge and the end of the section at Whananaki North.

The only side route on this section is a diversion around the head of the Whananaki spit.

## 5.14 Section 14 – Whananaki to Mimiwhangata (maps L and M)

This final section departs Whananaki on the formed road and follows the road corridor to the DOC reserve at Otamure Bay. Whilst an unformed road exists around the coastline between Whananaki and Otamure, the terrain is too severe to allow a walkway to be constructed within the 20m road reserve.

From Otamure Bay, the main route follows an existing Department of Conservation track north to Tauwhara Bay. A road reserve offers a rugged corridor on to Moureeses Bay and then to Rockells Bay. The terrain of much of this part of the section is difficult and would require several specially designed structures to create a serviceable walkway.

A steep headland a sequence of cliffs immediately to the north of Rockells Bay settlement require the route to follow the road reserve occupied by the existing road over the hill to Rockells Bay proper. The route then continues around a

reasonably generous reserve to Pareparea Bay. The land adjoining Pareparea Bay is in Maori ownership, so the route has not been shown as crossing that land. Access below Mean High Water Springs would be permitted in present circumstances.

The main route resumes to the north of the Maori land on the Department of Conservation's Mimiwhangata estate. The main route is shown as following an existing farm track across the DOC land to the end of this final section at the southern carpark. Access along the shoreline is possible other than at high tide.

Side routes include connections with existing Department of Conservation tracks around Mimiwhangata. Ultimately this section of the walkway may serve as a starting point for a connection with the DOC's walkway network around Cape Brett.

## 6 Physical Constraints to Walkway Development

The development of walkways may be physically constrained by:

- Terrain
- Crossing watercourses, harbours and estuaries.
- Environmental matters.

For the study area, the following constraints to walkway development were identified:

### 6.1.1 Terrain

Topographic constraints include the most severe landforms, such as cliffs, escarpments or areas where the sea may inundate routes available below high tide. The following table notes the most substantial of those obstacles.

Locality	Comments
Langs Beach (Map A)	Road narrow and winding – difficult to fit in path to cater for times when tide very high.  Cliffed sections north of beach include several guts that would require bridging.  Area around limestone formations steep in parts. Rocks themselves potentially dangerous with many crevasses.
Riverside Drive (Map E)	Embankment carrying road and buried services often narrow –



	requires path to be routed through CMA.
Beach Road Onerahi (Map E)	Waterside drive on reclaimed land atop a seawall for some distance. Limited alternative options for siting path, especially if it is to be wide enough to function as a cycleway too.
Southern edge Onerahi – Wakaraka (Map F)	Road reclamation too narrow to accommodate path. Would need to pass through the CMA.
Waikaraka (Map F)	Steep headlands at either end of settlement, with seawalls dropping to the tide. Would require cantilevered or independent structures, or further reclamation.
Parua Bay near Mt Tiger Road (Map G)	Road corridor narrow and winding, with limited space on cut/fill batters. Some structures likely to be needed to form useful route.
Taurikura – Urquharts Bay (Map H)	Road corridor very narrow and winding, drops to sea on one side and steep cut batter inland. Likely need for suspended structures for tightest parts of this route.
Bream Head (Map H)	Route up to and along main ridge likely to be too demanding for all but the fittest walkers. Track upgrades can assist but lower alternate route (not indicated on map) likely to be required.
Ocean Beach (Map H)	<p>Main route without significant difficulties, although a steep dune climb and the need to skirt a steep headland just to the north of Ocean Beach settlement would require some track safety works (this part of the route also noted as being on private land – see below – so no presumption of permitted public access).</p> <p>Alternative route: potential access problem at very high tide after storms have cut out the foredune toe may push walkers up into fragile dune system. Alternative high tide route along back of DOC reserve therefore promoted for development as main route.</p>
Pataua South Road (Map I)	Road platform typically narrow and winding and most margins very steep.
Parauwanui Beach - Pataua North Road (Map J)	<p>Alternative route: as for Ocean Beach above, but complicated by riparian rights for much of this frontage. Low tide option only.</p> <p>Traversing the ocean frontage of several small bluffs and promontories below MHWS also challenging. Potential conflict if walkers get caught by tide or find conditions too difficult and try to cut across land in private ownership.</p>
Horahora River southern bank (Map J)	Alternate route. Steepish bluffs and coastal bank. Privately owned above MHWS. See also Watercourses, Harbours and Estuaries in section 6.2 below.
Pataua North Road approaching Horahora River from the south (Map J)	Main route - parts of road platform very narrow and winding with margins steep at these points.

<p>Ngunguru to Tutukaka to Matapouri. (Map K)</p>	<p>Main route: a walking route within the Matapouri Road reserve is difficult, but not impossible to achieve. Whilst the road is public land, the terrain is such that the road reserve is typically almost entirely consumed by the narrow and winding formed road, a cut batter to the uphill side and a fill batter to the downhill side. Building a safe and easily used walkway is likely to require either extensive retaining structures or a suspended boardwalk on a substantial substructure. Walking on the existing road margin would be dangerous. Likely to require extensive structures to create a safe walking route.</p> <p>A potential route along the road reserve following the coastline is not recommended and is not shown on the maps. Extensive areas of very steep coastal cliffs and bluffs consume the entire 20m road reserve. Numerous cantilevered access structures would be needed to create a public route, at high levels of expense and potentially high visual and ecological effects.</p> <p>Combined with the large number of titles along this section and proximity of many houses to the seaward boundary, this section of the coastline is assessed by this study as not being a feasible route for a public walkway.</p>
<p>Woolleys Bay to Sandy Bay (Map L)</p>	<p>Short segments of steep, rocky terrain. Likely to require some suspended access structures, but not considered impassible.</p>
<p>Whananaki North to Otamure Bay (Map L)</p>	<p>Coastline very steep or cliffed. Road reserve largely taken up by cliffs etc and access probably not feasible at present. With a lower number of private titles on this section than the physically similar Tutukaka area, negotiations to widen the coastal road reserve may be worth pursuing, although matters of land value and owner privacy are likely to be an issue here too.</p>
<p>Coast around Mouresses Bay and Rockells Bay (Map M)</p>	<p>Generally quite steep and rugged with short segments of especially challenging terrain. Likely to require some suspended access structures, but not considered impassible.</p>
<p>Pareparea Bay (Map M)</p>	<p>Issues of access at very high tides along the beach similar to those at Ocean Beach and Parauwanui Beach, but with Maori land adjoining.</p> <p>Small points and promontories make an obstacle at high tide and will require both structures and legal access arrangements.</p>

## 6.1.2 Watercourses, Harbours and Estuaries

The eastern coastline includes a number of estuary systems that extend some distance inland. Crossing the most substantial of these water bodies is one of the

most challenging facets of creating a continuous east coast walking corridor. This table scopes these obstacles.

Locality	Comments
Waipu River (Map B)	Crossing river alongside existing road bridge approximately 120m potential as a cantilevered clip-on to existing bridge structure. Crossing downstream nearer mouth preferable for amenity of walk but incomplete public ownership of margins and connection to dune reserve presently preclude this option. Downstream bridge likely to need to be longer.
Ruakaka River (Map C)	Crossing point as shown requires bridge approximately 20m long. Crossing downstream nearer mouth preferable for amenity of walk, but involves considerably larger bridge of around 130m.
Whangarei Harbour mouth (Map D)	The most formidable water crossing on the route and one which will only be crossed courtesy of a scheduled ferry or water-taxi service. A ferry terminal has been allowed for in the design of the new port facilities. Options for loading on the Heads side at McLeod Bay, Taurikura or Urquharts Bay. All three jetties would need upgrading to cater for regular use.
Onerahi and Heads Road (maps E, F and G)	Two extensive lengths of boardwalk required where reclaimed road platform too narrow (see above table). Numerous small bridges and boardwalks to cross streams and minor tributaries.
Taiharuru River (Map I)	Extensive areas of riparian margin. Some areas of steep terrain, side inlet crossings and areas of boggy ground to traverse. Crossing of side channel approximately 20m and upper estuary channel of approximately 10m.
Horahora River southern bank (Map J)	Secondary route: Private ownership to MHWS. Intertidal route very muddy and impassible at high tide. Need for quite an extensive boardwalk in the absence of negotiated access across dry land.
Horahora River (Map J)	Estuary crossing. Primary points for a constructed bridge approx. 105m bank to bank.
Horahora River to Ngunguru River (Map J)	Extensive areas of wetland along route of legal road through Maori land. Some distance of boardwalk likely to be needed.
Ngunguru River (Map K)	Estuary crossing. Primary point for a constructed bridge approx. 205m span. Alternative inland route very circuitous. See discussion in Section 5.0
Parangarau Stream (southern edge of Matapouri (Map K)	Narrow estuary crossing alongside road bridge. Could be a clip-on to modern road bridge or use old road bridge abutments and central pier – dependent on structural advice and cost. Approximate width of 20m.  Further upstream, areas of boardwalks are likely to be needed to pass across wet areas alongside Matapouri Road if the inland

	route up this stream valley and over to Waiotoi Road is followed.
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### 6.1.3 Options for crossing Horahora and Ngunguru Rivers

Recognising that a boat is the only option for crossing the harbour, four rivers can be seen as the most demanding crossings offered by the route. The choices available for getting to the other side of the Waipu, Ruakaka (assuming that a crossing site near their mouths was chosen), Horahora and Ngunguru Rivers are worthy of further comment.

Crossing type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Pedestrian footbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guaranteed crossing.</li> <li>• Offers other recreational opportunities: fishing, diving etc.</li> <li>• No safety issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of capital cost and ongoing maintenance costs.</li> <li>• Visual / character impact.</li> <li>• Impedes upstream navigation by tall boats.</li> <li>• Potentially complex consent processes.</li> <li>• Vulnerability to damage during floods.</li> </ul>
Private ferry service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very low set-up cost.</li> <li>• Low impact upon character.</li> <li>• Adds to range of experiences of walk.</li> <li>• Provides local employment and income.</li> <li>• Could provide linkage to other private initiatives, such as accommodation, guided walks etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential reliability issues.</li> <li>• Not suited to casual use of walkway section.</li> <li>• Added cost for walkers.</li> <li>• May need docking facilities.</li> <li>• Possible access problems at low tide.</li> </ul>
Self drawn cableways (flying foxes) As seen on Regional Council monitoring stations on inland rivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate cost.</li> <li>• Less impedance to waterway navigation than bridge.</li> <li>• Relatively low impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety issues.</li> <li>• Towers may have to be quite high for biggest spans – influence on cost, vertigo for users, visual impact.</li> <li>• May need to be locked to avoid tampering, so not very flexible for casual use.</li> <li>• Physically demanding for less strong walkers.</li> <li>• May be prone to vandalism or damage by yacht masts etc.</li> </ul>
Self drawn boat or raft. (drawn across river by pulling on submerged cable which is linked to the raft by pulleys).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliability (but possibly locked or available only at certain hours of the day to prevent inappropriate use or damage).</li> <li>• Low cost.</li> <li>• Less impedance of waterway than bridge or overhead cableway.</li> <li>• Low impact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety issues.</li> <li>• Walkers would need to carry lifejackets and gloves.</li> <li>• May need to be locked to avoid tampering or theft, so not very flexible for casual use.</li> <li>• Practicalities of cable being clogged with seaweed, submerged logs etc carried by current.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically demanding for less strong walkers.</li> <li>• May be prone to vandalism or cable damaged by dragging anchors etc.</li> </ul>
Walkers carry their own inflatable boats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No set-up cost.</li> <li>• No impact upon character.</li> <li>• Adds to range of experiences of walk.</li> <li>• Assured transport for walking group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety issues. Strong currents etc.</li> <li>• Walkers would need to hire or purchase suitable craft and have burden of carrying boat, oars and lifejackets</li> <li>• Physically demanding for less strong walkers.</li> </ul>

#### 6.1.4 Conclusions

Estuary crossings over the Horahora and Ngunguru Rivers are probably the most challenging elements of creating the overall route. In order to avoid crossing either river, walkers would need to divert inland to Glenbervie and walk back out to Ngunguru on the Ngunguru Road – a considerable inland deviation. Crossing the Horahora River but diverting around the Ngunguru River still results in a roadside walk of some 17km along Ngunguru Ford Road and Ngunguru Road to reach Ngunguru in comparison with a 2km trip if a river crossing method were available.

Whilst some of the less “formal” options might offer a stop-gap measure for getting across the rivers, the ultimate solution would be to construct a pedestrian bridge across each. Since the likely costs and complexity of creating those structures will be high, it is recognised that the Pataua North Road to Ngunguru section is likely to be one of the last parts of the overall walkway route to be constructed.

The Waipu and Ruakaka Rivers meanwhile, do offer the option of less difficult crossing sites upstream (and as shown on the relevant maps), although the scale of the 120m “clip-on” pedestrian bridge needed for the Waipu River makes it a sizeable and costly structure.

## 7 Environmental Constraints to Walkway Development

The development of walkways is typically constrained by:

- Ecologically sensitive areas
- Water quality sensitive areas

For the study area, the following environmental constraints to walkway development in the study area were identified:

### **7.1.1 Ecologically Sensitive Areas**

The Whangarei District Council ecological site database provides an indication of those parts of the study area that may be ecologically sensitive to walkway development. Analysis of the database indicates that there are 17 areas of ecological significance in the study area. A brief description of those sites is as follows:

Location of Area	P.D.P. Map
Rockells Bay	3
Ngunguru Sandspit	8 and 13
Kauri Mountain	13 and 16
Ocean Beach	16 and 62C
Busby Head to Bream Head	16
Waipu Sandspit	19, 21, 59A and 59B
Tauwhara Bay	24
Whanaki Inlet	25
Matapouri Bay	27
Parua Bay	49
Reaotahi	53
Ruakaka River Mouth	56 and 57

### 7.1.2 Water Quality Sensitive Areas

Advice from the Northland Regional Council indicates that there are no parts of the study area that are more sensitive to the adverse effects of land development on the quality of coastal waters than any other parts. The Northland Regional Council also indicated that the development of walkways was unlikely to result in levels of sedimentation from earthworks that would have any significant impact on the quality of coastal waters.

## 8 Areas for Reserve Extension or Acquisition

Notwithstanding the fact that an Esplanade Reserve Priority Area' applies to the whole of the coastal strip related to the indicated main route, there are portions of the coast where a new esplanade or linking reserve would be particularly beneficial to the character and utility of a coastal walkway. These include:

1. Along the coast north of Langs Beach and south of Waipu Cove (already designated)

2. On a small segment of the landward side of the back-dune lagoon of the Waipu River, approximately 1km south of Johnson Point Road.
3. A connection between the esplanade / unformed road and the DoC dune reserve on the northern bank of the mouth of the Waipu River, ideally a little to the north of the mouth to avoid the roosting area.
4. In the south west corner of the Ruakaka racecourse (only needs a few square metres)
5. An east-west corridor across the new port development (may include the need for bridges or underpasses across transport corridors). Without this link walkers will face a 2km trek through heavy industrial development and miss the drama of the mouth of the harbour on their walk to One Tree Point.
6. A link across the landward "neck" of The Nook and thence along the foreshore to McLeods Bay.
7. Around the foreshore from Little Munroe Bay to Taurikura.
8. Across a parcel of land immediately to the north of Ocean Beach settlement, where an existing informal track cuts across a privately owned headland. This land is designated as Proposed Public Reserve (DW111) in the Proposed Whangarei District Plan. Map H, Appendix 3
9. On a side route along the coast between Awahoa Bay and Huitau Pa. See Map I.
10. Much of the frontage of Parauawanui Beach and southern bank of the Horahora River. See Map J.
11. From Tongatu Road to the potential crossing point over the Ngunguru River. See Map K.
12. A formal access running from Waiotoi Road to Parangarau Stream course (which wouldn't be an esplanade reserve such. See Map K.
13. A short link between a continuous road reserve and the incomplete road reserve currently followed by the Whananaki Walkway (near the Captain Bougainville Memorial) See Map L.
14. An inland extension to the 20m road reserve running from Whananaki to Otamure Bay (again not technically an esplanade reserve). See Map L.
15. Extensions to the coastal edge road reserve immediately to the south of Mouresses Bay and between Mouresses Bay and Rockells Bay (Partially addressed by designation DW102). See Map M.
16. Across the ocean frontage of a large parcel of land immediately to the south of Mimiwhangata Reserve. See Map M.



Providing access to the above areas would reduce the proportion of the route that has been identified as needing to follow the roadside by up to 50%, as well as reducing the overall length and development cost of the route.

## 9 Magnitude of Development Works

Costs for developing and maintaining walkways vary considerably. Routes across public land that is grazed may require no more than periodic waymarkers, occasional stiles or stock-proof gates and a sign or two. Maintenance on such paths is typically quite nominal. By contrast, negotiating access rights across private land or negotiating to purchase land in circumstances where both the owners and the District Council are willing parties, can be time consuming and expensive. Designing and constructing structures needed to achieve safe and practical access across steep sections of coastal bluff can also involve significant cost.

The authors of this study have been mindful of the realities of possible cost of such things as land purchase or compensation for access, as well as construction costs in terrain that is likely to require extensive structures to achieve a safe walking route. In situations where such costs are likely to be prohibitive, such as the coast between Matapouri and Tutukaka, alternative routes are presented.

Possible items of cost include:

- securing legal access across land - including the legalisation process itself – when willing parties to such a sale present themselves;
- surveying costs where ownership is already with public bodies, but where boundaries with adjoining landowners are not clearly defined on site. This situation may apply to a considerable number of road corridors and areas of reserve and is likely to be one of the major expenses in the overall project.
- planning and detailed design fees;
- formation costs for the path itself, including excavation, surfacing, drainage, steps etc;
- stand alone structures such as bridges, boardwalks and suspended steps;
- ancillary elements such as seats, bins, signs, waymarkers, stock fencing, stiles or stock-proof gates;
- carparks and general enhancements like planting, weed management, and pest management;
- printed interpretative and promotional information.

Upon completion, walking routes and structures require scheduled maintenance for vegetation clearance, track surface attention, watertable and drain clearance, checking and repairing structures, and ancillary management. These are all matters that would be integrated within Council's asset management programme. Costs for maintenance also vary according to the type of track and structures involved. Maintenance costs can therefore be more accurately predicted following detailed design of the track.

The types of path that are likely to be required to complete the coastal walkway system vary considerably, from crossing areas of beach and pasture which require little or no modification to achieve a serviceable route, through to hundreds of metres of estuary crossing and segments of coastal cliff needing cantilevered access structures. Preliminary detailed design of the walkway is needed to give meaningful cost figures. An overview of likely orders of cost can be gauged by a brief summary of the approximate distances of various types of access that are required for the main route from the data sheets that are attached in Appendix 4. In order of ascending likely cost, these are:

### 9.1.1 Walkway types and proportion of route

Path type	Length	% of overall
Backdune path (complemented by beach route)	19.3 km	11.2
Paddock with way-marker	43.9 km	25.4
Gravel / bush track	23.5 km	13.6
Roadside path	61.5 km	35.6
Boardwalk	1.7 km	1.0
Joint cycleway / walkway pavement	16.3km	9.4
Very steep coastal bank with structures	2.5 km	1.4
Cycleway / walkway boardwalk	3.2	1.9
River / estuary crossing	0.75	0.5
<b>Total:</b>	<b>172.6km</b>	<b>100%</b>

Whilst the last three items account for a little under 4% of the distance covered by the route, it is likely that these structures (if all were proceed as structural options) would consume more development finance than implementing the balance of the route.

## 10 Next Stages of work

This study has established that a walkway connection across the study area is legally and physically feasible, whilst acknowledging that there are some areas where terrain or ownership issues will present a challenge to detailed planning, design and funding. Several items of further background work are suggested below to support the strategic actions outlined in the following section.

- Urgent negotiation is required to attempt to incorporate an east-west pedestrian route across the Marsden Point port development in such a position that it provides a connection with the natural shoreline on either side.
- Detailed discussions with tangata whenua and Department of Conservation are needed.
- Dialogue with Te Araroa Trust would ensure that the coastal walkway meshes with the New Zealand-wide route sought by the Trust, and might enable Council to draw upon the various planning and negotiation resources that the Trust has at its disposal.
- Titles to critical areas of privately owned land need to be searched to check whether any easements or other legal means of public access exist on these properties.
- All areas where public access or ownership would be advantageous to the function of the route should be entered into Council databases to ensure that any negotiation opportunities are not missed.
- Sections of the route should be prioritised for implementation according to their ease of construction, cost and utility, with the cheapest and easiest routes being undertaken first.
- Ongoing study to investigate further extensions of the route to the District's northern boundary, and to examine any further side connections that could develop the walkway into a network that includes many smaller circuits, as opposed to a singular, linear route.

## 11 Suggested Strategic Actions

1. That public comment on the study be sought. This process should include scope for achieving improvements to the possible route shown by this study.
2. That following public consultation, a Coastal Walkway Strategy be developed, using this study as a basis, to provide policy guidance to divisions of the Council and for inter-relationships with DoC and other agencies.
3. That specific measures be put in place to ensure that any stopping or closure of a legal road, or disposal of other Council estate, has been fully assessed for its implications for the coastal walkway network, including any potential side connections.
4. That a section of the walkway be implemented as soon as possible to act as both a pilot and a benchmark for the balance of the route. Selection of an appropriate section for construction should be assessed with the following criteria in mind:
  - the ease with which the section can be undertaken (including consideration of potential legal and topographic obstacles);
  - the relative cost of achieving the total section;
  - and the level of amenity that the section would offer in the absence of further connecting sections of the route.

The portion of walk that is considered to best meet a balance of these criteria, whilst not being an entire section, is the link from McLeod Bay to Little Munroe Bay.

A second section recommended for early consideration is the Town Basin – Onerahi portion, which has potential for very heavy use by both cyclists and pedestrians, but will also require considerable funding to implement to a suitable standard to cater for that use.

# Appendices

## **Appendix 1: About Te Araroa Walkway**

## **Appendix 2**

# **Health and Safety in Employment**

## Appendix 3: Maps of Route (A-M)



## Appendix 4: Route Data Sheets