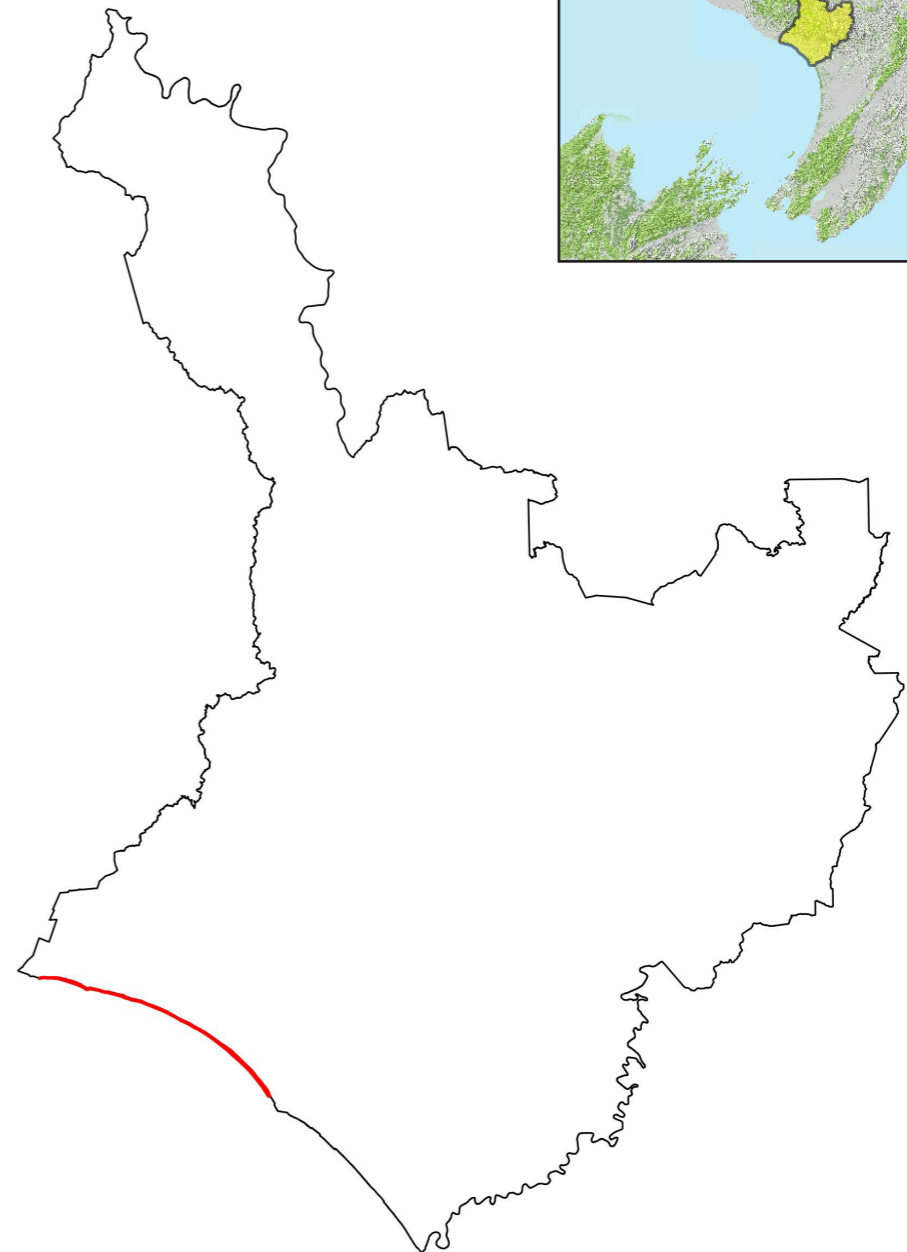
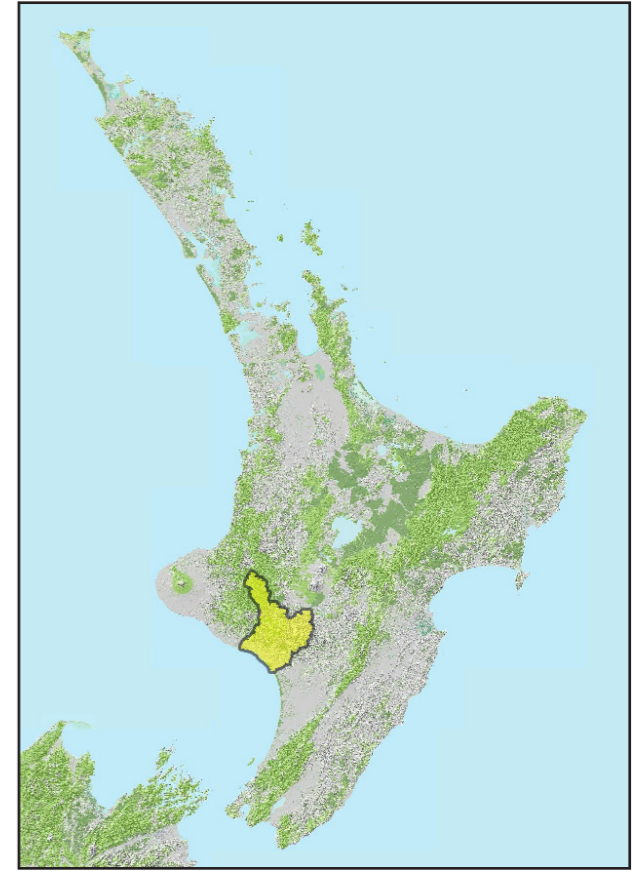


Area 6 Whanganui Western Coastline





Name:	Whanganui Western Coastline
Location:	NZ Topo 50 – BL32, BL31 & BK31
Description:	Coastal sea cliffs from Whanganui river mouth to District boundary at the eastern end of Waiinu Beach.
ONL/ONF:	Outstanding Natural Feature

Natural Science	Geological/ Geomorphological	The seaward lands of the rural terraces that form the Whanganui coastal cliffs originate from sedimentary deposits was laid down under the sea then uplifted over the last 500,000 years. The deposits were then cut into by rivers and the sea, exposing many layers of the original sediment. The cliffs contain layers of mudstone, sandstone, volcanic ash and limestone, with each layer also containing fossils from their respective periods. The hardness of the layers varies depending on the material, with the sea exposing and eroding these at varying rates depending on the material and coastal erosion pattern at the time. Coastal land towards the western end of the district are typically eroding, with farmland gradually receding and steep cliffs being exposed through the process. On the other hand, coastal land towards the Whanganui River is gradually expanding, with the accumulating material providing protection along their base by forming dunes and wetlands. The seaward groynes guarding the mouth of the Whanganui River may have influenced the littoral drift and contributed to the accretion in this area.
	Biological/ Ecological	Minimal vegetation towards the western end where constant erosion by the sea continually exposes bare sedimentary layers. Mixed native and exotic vegetation on the sea cliffs towards the eastern end and on the forming dunes at their base. Developing wetlands in several places between the dunes and cliffs, with associated wetland species inhabiting these.
	Hydrological	Coastal processes dominate this landscape character area. Occasion water flows through seams between the sedimentary layers, but can be tainted by the composition of the layers material. Dominant iron sand influence along the coast can also cause water to be brackish. A number of small streams emerge at points along the coast, but water quality appears to be degraded through rural influences on its overland flow.

Perceptual	Memorability	Memorable as an expansive coastal cliff system, generally unbuilt west of Castlecliff. Cliffs reach up to 40m in height, presenting a dominant vertical or steeply inclined and quite spectacular face to the broad sandy beach.
	Legibility/ Expressiveness	Clearly expressive of coastal uplift and erosion processes. The sedimentary nature of the uplifted material is clearly legible through the layering of varying materials. The erosion at the western end and accumulation of material at the eastern end is clearly legible and expressive of the coastal processes and littoral drift taking place along the bite.
	Transient	Climatic changes of onshore/offshore winds, sea spray and coastal birds.
	Aesthetic	Extensive linear cliff landform combined with the coastal grassland and some native vegetation cover towards the eastern end contributes to the coherence of this feature and is vivid particularly when observed from the beach. High aesthetic value due to dramatic appearance, naturalness and linear extent of the cliffs.
	Naturalness	High degree of naturalness, with a clearly powerful coastal processes dominating the coastal edge. Naturalness adversely influenced to some extent by proximity of houses towards the eastern end and non-native vegetation parallel to the beach.

Associational	Historical	The beach was the highway for travellers in previous times, while Whanganui Port of Castlecliff, located in the lower reaches of the river south of the town, was a significant maritime facility for the Taranaki coast. The port provided the opportunity for trade, exports of timber and farm produce from the hinterland, and a point of entry to the central north island via the river access to Taumaranui.
	Tangata Whenua	The coastal cliffs form the distinctive meeting point between the land and the sea along this section of the coast. The coastal edge have always been highly significant to Maori, providing a link to the food from the sea and the transport link provided by the beach. The cliffs are just the edge of an area highly significance to Maori, with the entire Whanganui River and its surrounds having high associational values.
	Shared/ Recognised	Cliffs recognised for the importance they play in coastal processes and coastal natural character. The object of study by students and practitioners in the fields of geologist, coastal process and anthropology, the sedimentary layers, the fossils and the accretion patterns inform current understanding on New Zealand's evolution over time. The cliffs are recognised in the One Plan as outstanding, reinforcing the shared associational values of this area. The ONFL covers a small part of Council's Castlecliff Domain, reinforcing the recognised values of the area.
Recreation	The cliffs provide a highly aesthetic backdrop to the beach and the recreational activities that can take place from there.	

Summary of Key Values	High aesthetic value as a backdrop as seen from the beach for its landscape and visual characteristics. Dramatic visibility of the uplifted sedimentary deposits and coastal erosion process generally visible west of the Omapu Stream outlet. Dominance of the uplifted vertical cliff face and increasingly aggrading dunes east of Omapu Stream.
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Potential Threats	Earthworks on the cliff faces, loss of indigenous vegetation on the cliffs. Structures in such proximity to the ONF that they adversely affect the cliff's dominance and perceived naturalness. Erosion of the dunes and loss of naturalness through quad bikes, tracking, vegetation clearance at the eastern end of the character area.
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Potential Policies	Avoid ground disturbance. Maintain free of development within the Feature. Limit adjacent development so that the Key Values of the cliffs are maintained.
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