



2.0 ESSENCE

2.1 ESSENCE OF THE PIHA AREA



Surf Life Saving

Piha is well known for its surf, with many thousands of visitors flocking to experience the consistent large waves formed from the Tasman Sea swells. This coastal environment is a hub for the surfer, or for the brave swimmer amid the wild west coast waves. The western flanks of the Waitakere Ranges serve as a great tramping experience for active recreationalists.

The Piha area is located within a catchment. Tall vegetated hills and headlands surround the Piha valley and beaches. A cluster pattern of settlement is located on the coastal flats and sporadic houses perched on the hills.



Natural Heritage



Waitakere Ranges



Extensive beach



Iron sands



Cultural Heritage/Tangata Whenua Values



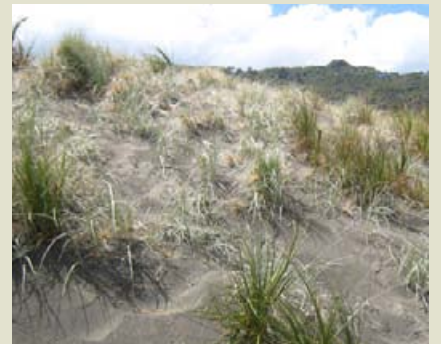
Streams and tributaries



Native flora and fauna



Surfing and swimming



Sand dunes



Walking and tramping tracks



Coastal village

2.2 STUDY AREA

For the purpose of these design guidelines, the study area will focus on land owned and managed by ARC between Anawhata in the North to Mercer Bay in the South. The extent of the study area will reach as far east as the upper reaches of the Winstone Track. The study area has been divided into 6 nodes. The purpose of creating study area nodes is to ensure that new development is relative to the immediate natural environment and takes cues from any existing local best practice examples.

Study Nodes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A) ANAWHATA | D) PIHA VALLEY, WAI O KAHU (GLEN ESK) & PIHA |
| B) WHITES BEACH, TE WAHA POINT, NORTH PIHA | MILL CAMP (STEDFAST PARK) |
| C) WHAKAARI (LION ROCK) | E) TASMAN AND GAP TRACK AND LOOKOUTS |
| | F) MERCER BAY LOOP TRACK AND LOOKOUTS |

Auckland Context Map:



Piha Study Area Map:



A] ANAWHATA



Anawhata is one of the more remote areas of the park. Access is via Anawhata Road. The parkland includes Anawhata Farm, the Anawhata Stream and catchment and access to a wild, West Coast beach. The area offers a remote experience within a unique ancient volcanic setting that has retained many of the intrinsic natural qualities of the West Coast, including natural unmodified coastal dune systems. The deeply incised Anawhata Gorge and adjoining beach are of regional geological significance. General public access to the beach is restricted to pedestrian access from the end

of Anawhata Road. There are a number of tramping and walking tracks through the locality.

B] WHITES BEACH, TE WAHA POINT, NORTH PIHA



North Piha Regional Parkland and at the north Kohunui Bay contains a sealed car park and picnic area, and provides access to the northern end of the beach. The area is a popular destination for surfers and leads to tramping tracks to Whites Beach and Anawhata. The area is dominated by the dune system behind the beach and Te Waha Point. Further north there are cliffs surrounding Whites Beach and Paikea Bay and one of the best exposed craters in the Waitakere Ranges. Northern blue penguins and grey-faced petrels nest

C] WHAKAARI (LION ROCK)



North Piha Regional Parkland and at the north Kohunui Bay contains a sealed car park and picnic area, and provides access to the northern end of the beach. The area is a popular destination for surfers and leads to tramping tracks to Whites Beach and Anawhata. The area is dominated by the dune system behind the beach and Te Waha Point. Further north there are cliffs surrounding Whites Beach and Paikea Bay and one of the best exposed craters in the Waitakere Ranges. Northern blue penguins and grey-faced petrels nest along the coast.

D] PIHA VALLEY WAI O KAHU (GLEN ESK) AND PIHA MILL CAMP (STEDFAST PARK)



The Piha Valley has high ecological value, a rich mature broadleaved forest with regenerating kauri that is contiguous to the more exposed coastal vegetation to the south and the kauri forest in the upper Piha catchment. The area was the site of the Piha Mill, one of the ranges' major timber milling operations which was established in 1910 and closed in 1921. It is a popular destination with people seeking accessible walks within mature native bush and views of the scenic Kitekite Falls. The falls are one of several regionally significant waterfalls that reflect the

interaction of fluvial erosion processes with the varied lithology of the Waitakere Ranges. The area is popular as a picnic area and provides extensive tramping opportunities as an access point for a range of tramping tracks in the wider area, including the Maungaroa Lookout Track. The area currently known as Piha Mill Camp (Stedfast Park) includes an outdoor education camp based at the foot of the valley which is operated under licence. There is also a small green along Glen Esk Road (Sir Algernon Thomas Green).

E] TASMAN AND GAP TRACK AND LOOKOUTS



The Tasman Lookout Track provides views over the southern reaches of Piha beach, Lion Rock and The Gap. The Gap Lookout overlooks Taitomo Island, owned by Te Kawerau o Maki. There is a gate near the entrance to the Tasman Lookout Track which the Piha Deep Sea Fishing Club use to access the beach and for boat launching.

F] MERCER BAY TRACK AND LOOKOUTS



The Mercer Bay Loop Walk provides an accessible route to spectacular elevated vistas of the rugged West Coast shoreline, Whatipu and the Tasman Sea. The Maori pa, known as the Te Ahua pa, is surrounded by steep natural defences. The area is accessed off Log Race Road.

