

SUMMARY – ROB GREENAWAY (RECREATION)

1. My evidence reviews the potential effects on recreation values of Northport's proposal to undertake dredging and reclamation adjacent to the existing Port facilities, including the construction, maintenance and operation of the proposed reclamation and dredged area.
2. My intercept and observation surveys indicate a diversity of recreational activities occurring at Marsden Bay Beach, with a focus on fishing at the pontoon and near the Channel Infrastructure wharf, and swimming at the pontoon and along the beach. Socialising, sightseeing, dog walking and picnicking were commonly observed. Users included a significant proportion from Whangarei and beyond. With the exception of the Marsden Point to One Tree Point area, the southern Whangārei Harbour shores contain large areas of tidal flats and mangroves that are generally unsuited to swimming. I find that the study area is of regional significance for recreation.
3. The proposed reclamation will have adverse effects on Marsden Bay Beach as a recreation destination, but the proposed development will retain many elements of existing recreation amenity. Residual adverse effects (including cumulative effects of the already consented Berth 4 development) on recreation, particularly the reduced sense of scale, are likely to be significant for recreational users of the beach and more than minor at the regional level. My assessment is supported by Council's s42A report.
4. The proposed dredge activities will have no effects on recreation beyond which currently occur as a result of existing consented dredge activity.
5. I am in general accord with the findings of the s42A report, and agree that there are options for off-site local mitigations for the residual adverse effects of the proposal. These have been discussed through the preparation of the recreation Joint Witness Statement (JWS). A suite of potential mitigation developments has been proposed, with estimated costs. I understand that the planning team addressed these matters as part of the preparation of their JWS, but that agreement has not yet been reached.
6. I am keenly aware that mana whenua iwi and hapu and stakeholders have not reviewed these mitigations, but in my opinion they represent an envelope within which appropriate recreation mitigations can be agreed.