



# Bay of Islands

## Pre-Arrival Information Pack

Last update September 2023

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## Cruise Ship Pre-arrival Information Bay of Islands

Welcome to the Bay of Islands. The following information is provided to assist with cruise ship passage planning. The plans and details below are based on many years of successful cruise ship visits. The information provided below will answer most queries visiting vessels have previously requested.

### Pilot Arrangements and Initial Radio Contact

Pilotage for the Bay of Islands must be pre-arranged via agents or direct through the Northland Regional Council Harbourmaster.

Pilots may be Whangarei or Opuia based and there is no monitored port radio.

The Pilot will **not** be contactable via VHF until **30 minutes** before the pre-arranged boarding time when the pilot boat will be in range. The usual channel is VHF Ch 12.

### Pilot Boarding

The pilot boat 'Waikare' pictured right, is a multi-purpose work boat. The pilot will board off the bow. Boarding height is 2 metres. If the access door is at this height or lower, then a ladder may not be required. Man ropes are not usually required for boarding.

To prevent damage to the ladder, the ladder should be rigged then hauled clear until the pilot vessel is alongside.

Boarding speed is typically 8 knots but may be reduced to 6 in adverse weather.

Occasionally it may be necessary for the ship to create a lee to allow for safe boarding by the pilot. This is typically the case in strong North Easterly sea or swell conditions. In these instances, the Pilot will endeavour to board further out to allow additional room for manoeuvring. When a lee is requested, it is preferable for the ship to keep further to the west of the leads before altering onto a Southerly/ South Easterly heading for the pilot to board on the starboard side. Once the pilot is on board, the ship can alter to starboard to proceed back to the white sector of the lead.

Pilot boarding approximate position:

35° 12.55S 174° 08.05E

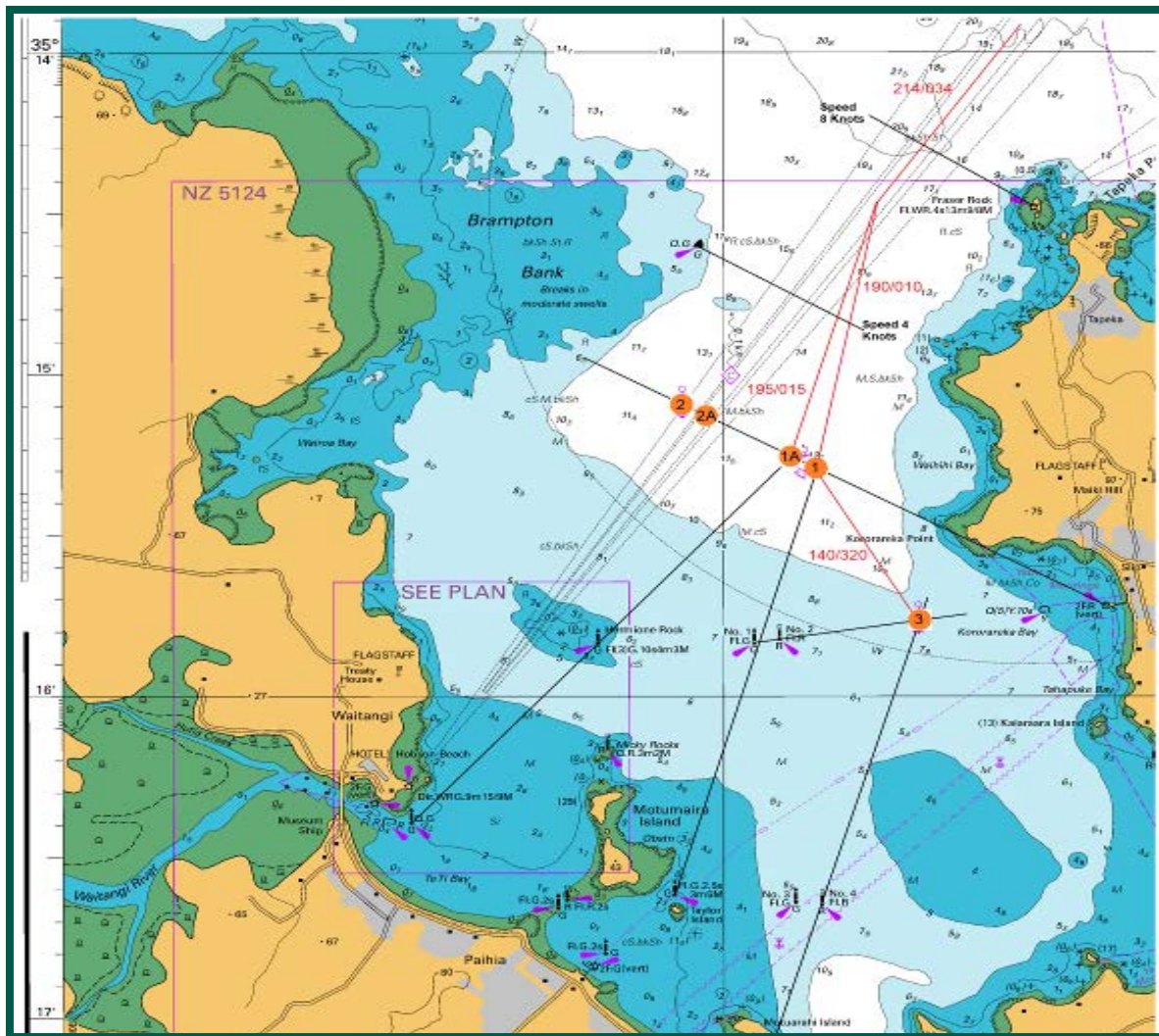
2nm from Tapeka in White sector







## Bay of Islands Passage Plan



It is requested that the ship has full light sectors displayed on their ECDIS for both arrival and departure, so the Waitangi Lead Light sectors are shown. The Pilot will board with a prepared passage plan which includes the use of the Waitangi Lead Light. It is expected that visiting vessels in keeping with best practice also take it into their consideration when planning and executing their transits. With relatively few other aids to navigation by way of buoys and beacons on the initial approach, the directional light plays a major role as far as visual references are used in the safe navigation of the vessel.

The designated anchorages are chosen as the best combination of safe depth of water, shelter from sea and swell and closest proximity to the ISPS compliant landing facilities. The designated anchorage for each vessel is assigned by the Harbourmaster pre-arrival. If there are two vessels visiting the Bay, there is little flexibility and therefore it is important to ensure that that vessel anchors as close as possible to the position prescribed.

**Note: Bampton Buoy (Q.G) is now position 35°14.799's 174°06.053'E and marks the outer edge of the 8m Contour line immediately adjacent to the outer edge of the Waitangi Leads green sector.**

## Passage Plan Outline

Pilot Boarding Ground 35° 12.9'S 174° 7.8'E. Proceed in on 214°		Pilot Boarding 6-8 Knots
For Anchorages 1/1A 3 and C	From 214° alter course in Position 35°12.55'S 174° 08.4'E	8 Knots when passing Tapeka
For anchorage #1	Onto 190°	Final Position 35° 15.28'S 174° 06.27'E
For anchorage #1A	Onto 195°	Final Position 35° 15.26'S 174° 6.20'E
For Central Anchorage	Onto 205°	Final Position 35° 15.20'S 174°06.05'E Lies on Veronica leads leadline
For anchorage #3	Approach as for #1, when in #1 Anchorage Position, Alter on to 140°	Final Position 35°15.76'S 174°06.62'E
For Anchorage 2A	Remain on 214	Final Position 35°15.12'S 174°05.93'E (Centre of the white sector)
For Anchorage #2	From 214 alter course when in position 35° 14.85'S 174° 06.19'E Onto 226°	Final Position 35° 15.09'S 174°05.93'E (Outer Edge of Green Sector)

## Anchorage Information

Anchorage Number	Latitude	Longitude	Charted Depth	Max Draught	Max Length	Dist to 10m Line	Dist PBG to Anchorage
1	35° 15'.28S	174° 06'.27E	12.0m	10.0m	330m	0.22'	2.73'
1A	35° 15'.26S	174° 06'.20E	12.5m	10.5m	350m	0.27'	2.73'
Central	35° 15'.16S	174° 06'.17E	12.5m	10.5m	350m+	0.28'	2.72'
2	35° 15'.09S	174° 05'.87E	11.0m	9.2m	300m	0.25'	2.70'
2A	35° 15'.12S	174° 05'.93E	11.5m	10.5m	350m	0.28'	2.70'
3	35° 15'.76S	174° 06'.62E	10.0m	8.3m	160m	0.22' (to 5m Cont)	3.29'

Anchorage 1, 2, and 3 have been the long-established positions. Due to the more frequent double vessel visits, and the increasing length of vessels, 1A is often used if only one vessel in the harbour for vessels around 300m LOA giving slightly more clearance from the 10m contour.

In the case of two vessels visiting, anchorage 1 is usually designated for the smaller vessel and 2A for the larger if over 300m. Two pilots are generally used when vessels arrive close together and will liaise with each other and the ships master's to ensure both vessels are safely anchored.

The central position can be used for larger vessels requiring maximum clearance. This is also suitable for larger vessels in a strong westerly giving more clearance from the Russell shallows. Note however that the further out into the bay, even by a small distance, exposes the vessel to more ocean swell.



Any NEly swell has an effect at the outer anchorages. The pilot will provide up-to-date advice on the day.

## Tender Operations

### Overview

After the vessel is safely anchored, the pilot will provide advice on tender operations. The only ISPS compliant landing facility is at Waitangi which is reserved for passenger ship use during the vessel's stay. Pre-arranged trips will generally meet with passengers at Waitangi, and a bus is normally provided between Waitangi and Paihia town 5 minutes away.

Landing is also possible at Russell wharf direct. However please note that Russell wharf can be busy in peak season, and is open to tourist operators, ferries, and the public.

Paihia wharf is not generally suitable for tender operations as this is mainly a commercial wharf with little spare capacity for tenders. However, when two cruise vessels are in the harbour then the vessel at 1 or 1A will normally tender to Paihia, and the vessel at 2 or 2A will tender to Waitangi. This allows for separation of passengers and less confusion at the tender arrival points.

Shore tendering service (two Ex Sun Princess tenders) may be available depending on resources. Enquire through your agent.

There is some limited availability of tenders via one of the local tourist operators, but it is weather dependant, and dependant on the operator's other commitments. Contact your agent for availability.

Navigation safety in the Bay of Islands is regulated under the Northland Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017, available from the Northland Regional Council Website.

Speed of tenders is to be five knots or less when:

- i. Within 50 metres of any other vessel, floating structure, or person in the water; or
- ii. Within 200 metres of the shore or any structure; or
- iii. On the inshore side of a row of buoys marking the limit of a five-knot area; or
- iv. Within 200 metres of any vessel or floating structure that is flying Flag A.

Tender refuelling is permitted provided all precautions are taken to prevent spillage. Any spills must be reported immediately to the harbourmaster via the agent.

If required, the Pilot vessel Waikare can lead the first tender in to show the way to the tender berths.

### Waitangi

**Tender Berth: 35° 16.34'S 174° 4.89'E**

Waitangi is the only ISPS compliant Facility in the bay of islands and is especially set up to accommodate tendering operations. It is approximately 1.7nm and a 20 min trip from the anchorage into the tender berth. Tenders should proceed in from the anchorage to pass between the Starboard Hermione Rock Beacon and the Port Mickey Rocks Beacon and head towards the Waitangi lateral marks. The outer most green lateral mark must be kept to starboard. Once around the outermost green Waitangi lateral mark the channel is easily made out and the tender berth can be observed. Ensure that the tenders keep to the marked channel and do not cut corners. Passing on the shore side of the Starboard Waitangi Beacons will result in grounding on rocks. Passing on the shore side of the Port Waitangi Buoy will result in grounding on sand. On approach to the tender berth a shore representative will guide the tender in where to berth. The berth can accommodate 3 tenders at any one time, two tenders on the outside and one on the inside. Refer to attached berth plan.

Ensure the tender skippers are clear that it is not safe to go the wrong side of Hermione Rock beacon, Mickey Rock beacon, or the Waitangi Starboard hand beacons. There are rocks and reefs



that will damage the tenders, especially at low tides.

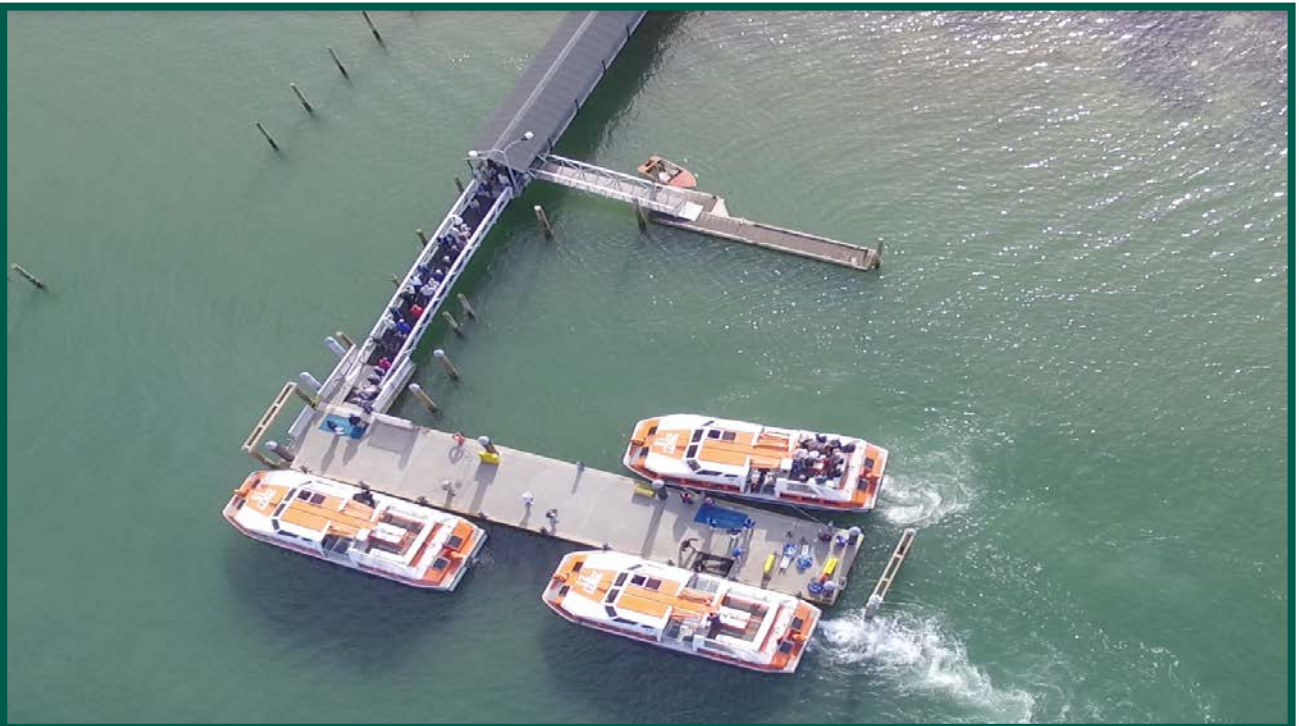
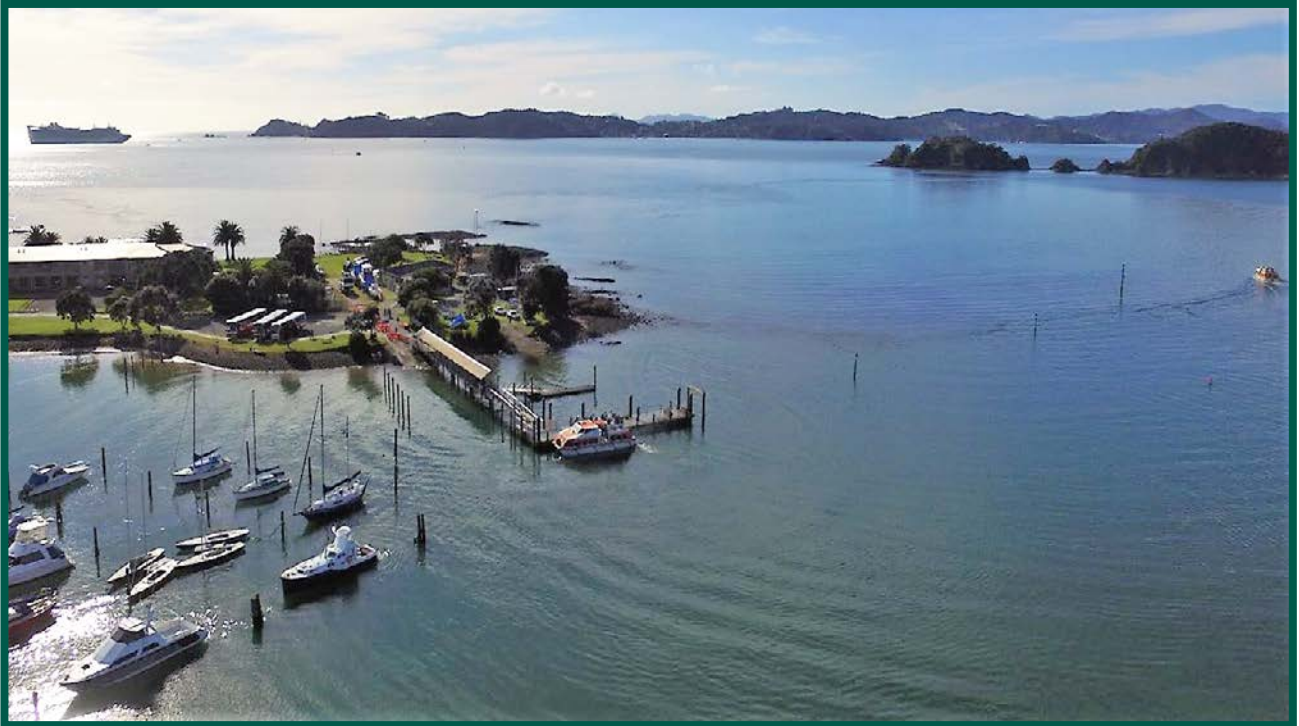
### Tender Routing to Waitangi







## Waitangi Wharf Overview





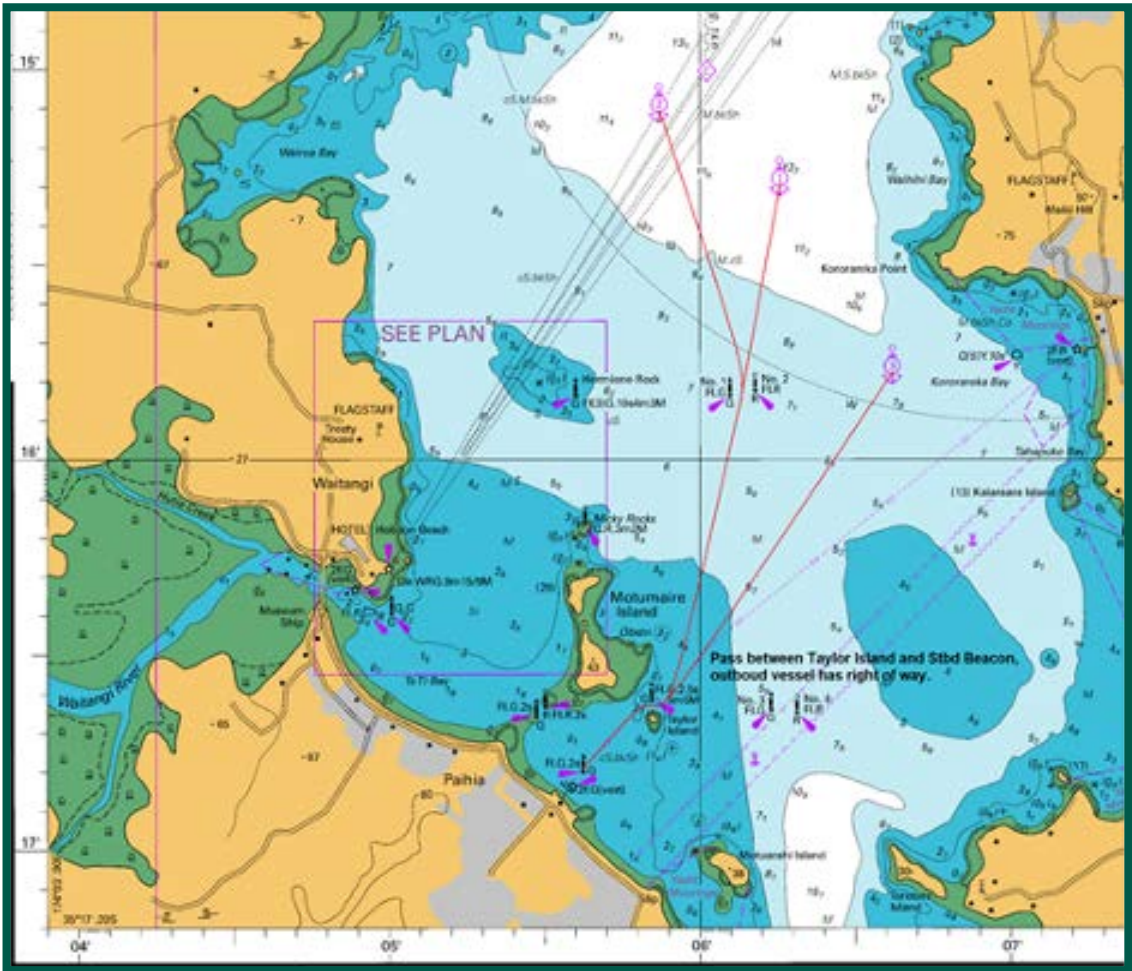
## Paihia:

**Tender Berth: 35° 16.82'S 174° 5.57'E**

When two vessels are occupying 1 and 2 anchorages, typically the vessel occupying # 1 Anchorage will tender to Paihia. Paihia is a non ISPS compliant facility and it is important to note that it is a busy wharf used by the local transport operators and. It is also accessible by the public both from the shore side and from recreational vessels. There is commercial ferry traffic arriving and departing frequently with limited room to manoeuvre once inside the basin. Care should be taken by the tender skippers to check that there is enough room before heading in (or departing) to avoid congestion. On the approach into Paihia, it important to keep the Taylor Island starboard beacon to starboard to pass between the beacon and Tailor Island. It is a narrow passage and can accommodate only one vessel at a time. When two vessels look to meet, due to the limited space inside, local convention is that the vessel outbound has right of way and the inbound vessel is to wait until the passage is clear before proceeding in. Pontoon #5 is typically reserved for tendering and will accommodate 2 tenders at one time, one each side. It is important that the tenders keep to their assigned jetty to minimise disturbance to local traffic and public. In addition, there are local yacht moorings in close proximity once inside the basin and care should be taken to keep tender wakes to a minimum, in any case tenders should not be proceeding any quicker than 5 knots once within 200m of shore, or within 50m of another vessel.

### Tendering to Paihia





**Aerial View and Tender Berth Paihia**







## Russell:

**Tender Berth: 35° 15.73' S 174° 7.24' E**

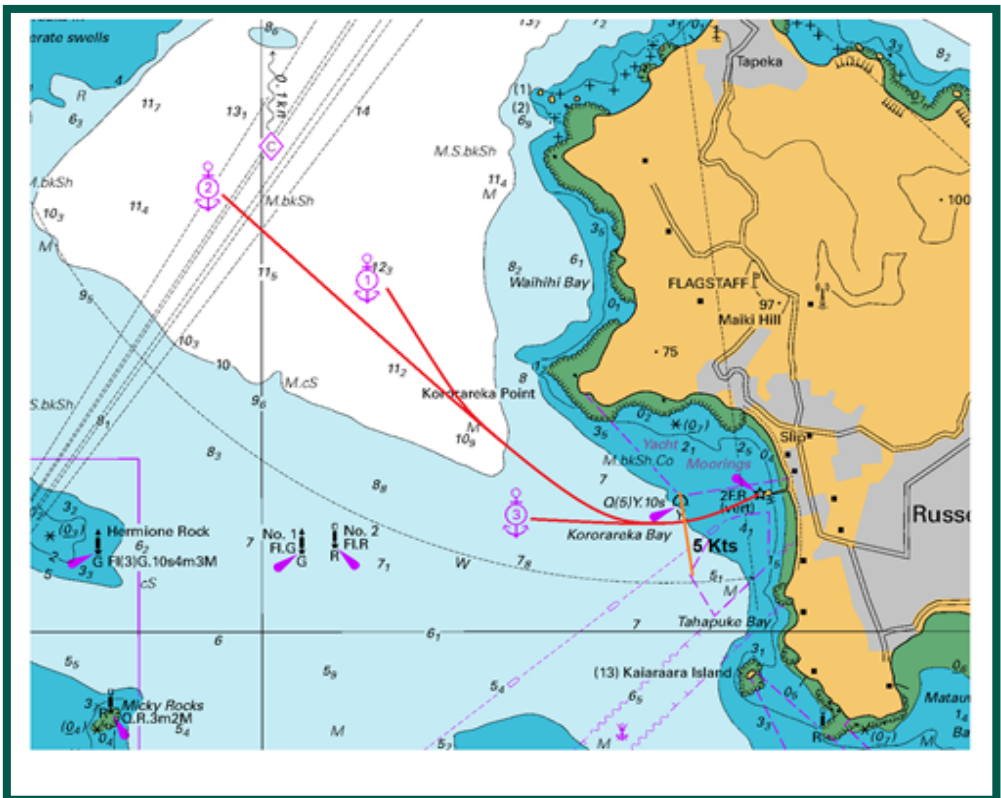
Russell is a small historic town that cannot cope with a large influx of passengers at once, so it is not possible for all ships passengers to tender direct to Russell. Tendering into Russell is typically only done from smaller vessels occupying #3 Anchorage. Individual tenders can proceed direct to Russell from any anchorage in the case for instance of a shore excursion party. The tender route into Russell is relatively simple however be aware that the wharf, like Paihia, is a non-ISPS compliant facility and is used by commercial transport operators, recreational boats and is also accessible by the public from the shore side. This can make the wharf and approaches very busy. The northern side of Russell wharf is reserved for use by commercial operators only. The pontoon to the south is free for use by ships tenders, public and recreational traffic.

The main points to note when approaching the tender berths are that there are yacht moorings either side of the approach to the wharf. There is a clear channel between the moored vessels to access the wharf however care needs to be exercised to ensure that tenders keep their wakes to minimum, and if necessary, stopping completely to allow the wake to dissipate before proceeding past the moorings. Yellow buoys demark the 5-knot zone on approaching the wharf and tender skippers are to ensure that they are proceeding at or below 5 knots on the inshore side of these buoys.

A vigilant lookout must be kept, and care taken for both for commercial and recreational traffic, small craft such as paddle boards and kayaks as well as swimmers near the wharf. A regular ferry service runs between Russell and Paihia.



# Approaches to Russell Wharf



## Weather Information

The Bay of Islands weather can change rapidly. Wind speeds of 30 knots from the NE may in combination with a NE swell make pilot transfers and tendering difficult and the situation should be monitored carefully. Each situation should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be discussed with the pilot.

Wind speeds consistently exceeding 35 knots from any direction will cause a sea state making tendering precarious for passenger transfers to tenders and create a high risk of dragging anchor if trying to create a lee using stern thrusters. Depending on the forecast a discussion with the Harbourmaster over conditions is advisable for the call, and he may advise cancelling the call.

Wind speeds forecast exceeding 40 knots sustained will mean the call will have to be cancelled, (apart from no.3 anchorage in certain directions).

Swell can often worsen when crossing the 20m contour line off Fraser rock but eases significantly at #1 anchorages, and seldom affects operations at #3.

#1 and #2 are most affected by wind and swell conditions from the Northeast given its North Easterly exposure, #2 is the most exposed anchorage, while #1 anchorages provide a moderate amount of shelter. #3 anchorage is a very sheltered position however in high winds ships should remain vigilant as there is not much room between the anchoring position and the grounding line should the ship drag its anchor, particularly in SW conditions.

The central anchorage position has been updated this year 2023 to reflect the favoured position for larger over 300m vessels, when the sole vessel and weather is either calm or strong westerly. (Giving increased clearance from the Russell shallows.

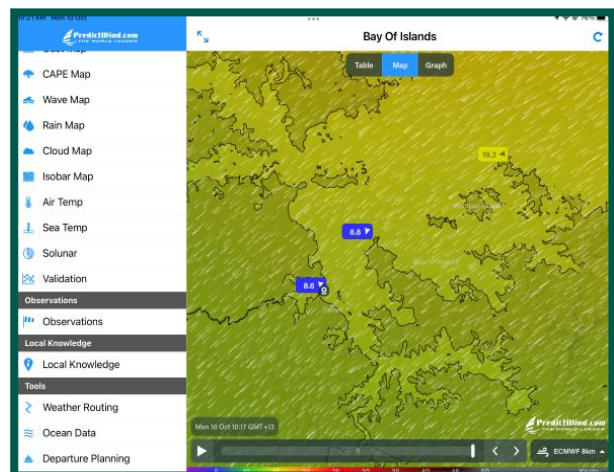
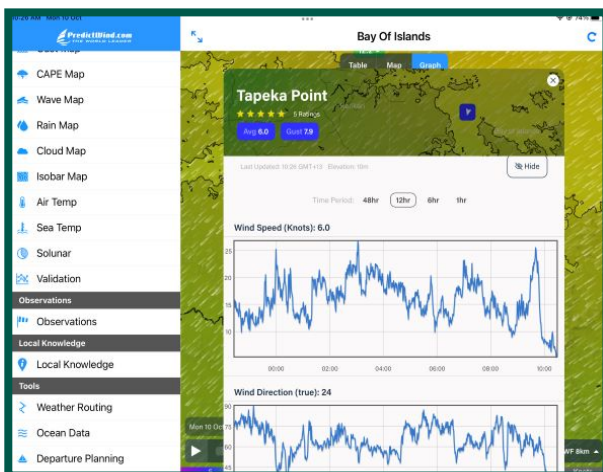
The Pilot will provide advice on which anchor to use based on the weather conditions on the day to best create a natural lee for tendering.

**If vessels have preferences for anchoring, or a side they are limited to tender off then these should be made known to the Pilot prior to arrival.**

Occasionally thick fog can be present in the bay during early mornings by typically burns off before mid-morning. Tenders without radar should remain with the vessel until they can see the land.

Pilotage is permitted in Fog but fog signals must be used regardless of the time of day, and a reduced safe speed will be required.

The PredictWind app & website provide real-time data from local weather stations. Current wind speeds at Okahu Island (outer Bay of Islands), Tapeka Point and Waitangi are available, a live



webcam stream of the tender route to Waitangi is also available. PredictWind's basic package is required to access the cameras. Once logged in select Bay of Islands as the area, and the live feeds are available under observations.

Wind and sea/swell is available as a live feed from a wave data buoy on the northern side of Bay offshore. See 3 for links to the feed In safety information next.

## Safety Information

1. There is an 8.8m shoal adjacent to Brampton Buoy on the approaches within the pilot area. The Pilot will keep the vessel well clear. The Brampton Buoy now marks the shoal.
2. The Bay of Islands weather can change rapidly. Sea conditions also change rapidly, especially in North Easterly weather. Vessels should maintain contingencies for engine availability and immediate departure if required.
3. Current sea conditions can be accessed via the [wind and wave data buoy](#) installed offshore outside the Bay of Islands harbour, on the northern side of the Ninepin. The buoy is positioned to ensure data is recorded by waves that have the greatest impact on the bay. ([www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/environmental-data/environmental-data-hub](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/environmental-data/environmental-data-hub))
4. Navigation safety in the Bay of Islands is regulated under the Northland Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2017, available from the [Northland Regional Council website](#).
5. Speed of tenders is to be 5 knots or less when:
  - i. Within 50 metres of any other vessel, floating structure, or person in the water; or
  - ii. Within 200 metres of the shore or any structure; or
  - iii. On the inshore side of a row of buoys marking the limit of a 5-knot area; or
  - iv. Within 200 metres of any vessel or floating structure that is flying Flag A.
6. Refuelling of tenders is allowed, provided all precautions are taken to prevent any spill.
7. Hot work inboard is permitted provided the code of safe working practices is complied with, as well as ships safety procedures. Any oversight work should be discussed with the Harbourmaster.

## Marine Pollution Regulations

Due to concerns for the Bay of Islands marine environment and the effects of sewage discharges from ships, the Northland Regional Council seeks clarification of visiting cruise ship's compliance with the Resource Management (Marine Pollution) Amendment Regulations 2002.

In summary, these regulations, in conjunction with the requirements of the Regional Plan for Northland, make it illegal for a vessel to discharge untreated sewage into any coastal waters that are within all Northland Harbours, including the Bay of Islands.

Given the sensitive nature of the environment, and the size of the ships, preference is that there is no discharge of treated sewage at all within Northland coastal waters.

The discharge of oil, untreated sewage or garbage is strictly prohibited. Any accidental discharge should be reported to the Northland Regional Council Environmental Hotline on 0800 504 639.

No over side washing, chipping, painting, or other work that may cause releases to the environment will be allowed.

Exhaust gas scrubber water is also not permitted to be released into the sea under the coastal plan. Please try to keep exhaust fumes as clean as possible. Clouds of black smoke are not well received by locals.



## Other Information

### Use of Drones

Commercial or private use of drones to film the ship during its arrival or departure from the Bay of Islands is strictly prohibited. Filming is allowed once the ship is safely at anchor and clearance has been granted by the Pilot.

### Customs and Immigration and Agents

Shore officials will arrive by their own vessels once the ship is anchored. Tenders may be launched but must stay by the vessel until the officials give clearance to proceed to shore. Every effort is made not to delay tendering operations. Should officials be delayed, the master should request the Pilot call the agent, who will most likely be able to liaise with officials to allow the first tender to proceed to shore.

### Local Radio

There is a local harbour radio called Russell Radio that operates on VHF CH 63 with limited hours. This is primarily a recreational craft advice radio station and there is no requirement for the cruise vessel to call in. The Pilot and/ or the Harbourmaster often use this radio to provide local warnings regarding visiting vessels, particularly when manoeuvring.

If the vessel wishes to speak to the Harbourmaster or Pilot, please use the telephone numbers provided by the Pilot, or call the agent.

### First Time Visitors

For vessels on their first visit to the Bay of Islands, it is customary to carry out a plaque exchange. Due to the tender operations required for ferrying VIPs out to the vessels ceremonies will add to an already busy day for the ship. In consideration of this the usual practice is for the Pilot (who, when possible, on these occasions will be the senior Harbourmaster) will present the plaque following the inbound pilotage. A more formal or a cultural ceremony and welcome will sometimes be available ashore at Waitangi.

### Te Pēwhairangi (Bay of Islands) Marine Mammal Sanctuary

The Bay of Islands is declared as a Marine Mammal Sanctuary under the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978. This was gazetted on 17 November 2021 by the Minister of Conservation and came into effect on 15 December 2021.

Vessels over 500 GT are exempt from this act, however tenders will need to comply, keep to 5 knots if Dolphins are in the vicinity, and stop if dolphins approach. If no dolphins are observed then normal operations proceed.

The full link can be found on [www.Doc.govt.nz](http://www.Doc.govt.nz) and search for marine mammal sanctuary. Key text is provided below.

#### *Restrictions in the Marine Mammal Sanctuary and Marine Mammal Safe Zones*

- (1) Every person commits an offence who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, is in the water within 300m of any marine mammal in the marine mammal sanctuary, including marine mammal safe zones.*
- (2) Every person in charge of a vessel commits an offence who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, fails to ensure their vessel:*
  - i. maintains a minimum 300m distance from any marine mammal in the marine mammal sanctuary, including marine mammal safe zones; or
  - ii. stops if the person in charge becomes aware of any marine mammal less than 300m distance in the marine mammal sanctuary, including marine mammal safe zones; or

- iii. remains stopped until any marine mammal is more than 300m away in the marine mammal sanctuary, including marine mammal safe zones.
- (3) *Every person in charge of a vessel commits an offence who, without lawful authority or reasonable excuse, fails to ensure their vessel travels at five knots or slower while in a marine mammal safe zone.*
- (4) *For the purposes of this notice, a person with “lawful authority or reasonable excuse” includes:*
- i. any person involved in a maritime emergency or undertaking a maritime emergency role;
  - ii. any person in charge of a vessel that is restricted in its ability to manoeuvre and exhibiting the appropriate signals;
  - iii. any person in charge of a vessel greater than 500 gross tonnes (GRT);
  - iv. any person not able to comply due to an imminent or serious threat to person or property;

## Marine Bio security

Various harmful organisms are present in the Bay of Islands, including recently Caulerpa seaweed and fanworm. Caulerpa has not yet been seen to have arrived at the inner bay, but has unfortunately been found in the outer bay around Rawhiti where anchorage restrictions are in place. As a precaution please ensure the anchor is clean after lifting and sighted and clear. Dropping back to the water while getting underway is a sensible measure. This will help prevent the further spread of unwanted organisms.

## Other Local Info

The Bay of Islands is one of the most popular recreational boating areas in New Zealand. Small vessels will often be out before dawn fishing on the approach line. There is a Harbourmaster’s guideline not to impede the approach line during cruise ship visits and to keep well clear, the pilot vessel will endeavour to enforce this and clear the way. Use of the ships whistle is strongly advised if in doubt.

There are frequent events and sail competitions. The Harbourmaster will ensure these do not cause any problem for the cruise ship or tender.

If you have any further queries please ask the Harbourmaster, Pilot, or agent. We hope your visit goes well and is enjoyable. If you encounter any problems or wish to feedback any information, please feel free to contact us at [harbourmaster@nrc.govt.nz](mailto:harbourmaster@nrc.govt.nz).

## **Northland Regional Council**

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