

SUMMARY STATEMENT – STEPHEN BROWN (LANDSCAPE)

1. My name is Stephen Brown. I have practiced as a landscape architect for over 40 years. My qualifications and experience are set out in my evidence.
2. I prepared the Landscape Report attached to the AEE as Appendix 15. My evidence builds on that report, as such I have considered the full range of landscape, natural character and amenity effects that would be generated by the port expansion proposal. I have reviewed those effects in the context of relevant statutory instruments.
3. In the course of undertaking that assessment I identified those receiving environments and audiences likely to be affected by the current Northport proposal, then assessed the effects on them employing a range of viewpoints that represent the different catchments and audiences found around the existing port and Whangarei Harbour. I have undertaken my evaluation of landscape, natural character and amenity effects employing criteria that are directly relevant to those effects, including night-time, as well as daytime, effects.
4. Overall, I have concluded that the proposed port development's **landscape effects** would range from very low to high. Reotahi would be affected to a moderate-high degree, reflecting its proximity to the port and direct focus on it cross-harbour views, but effects in relation to the rest of Whangarei Harbour and its settled margins would typically be of a very low to low order.
5. Effects on the Harbour's **natural character values** would be more modest because of the already modified, to highly industrialised, nature of parts of its coastline – in the vicinity of Marsden Point most of all. Such effects would peak at a moderate to moderate-high level near the entrance to the harbour and along Reotahi's beachfront, but would be typically of a low to very low order elsewhere.
6. Finally, **amenity effects** would reach a moderate to moderate-high level at Reotahi and Marsden Point Beach / Bay. However, they would rapidly tail off away from these locations – again being of a very low to low order for the vast majority of Whangarei Harbour's coastal environs and hinterland.
7. I attended the landscape expert conferencing session on 21 September, at which three key matters that were raised:
8. The first of these pertained to the height of the four proposed STS cranes and their impact on both the narrow 'throat' of the harbour near the port, including – by extension - their effects on the Mt Aubrey ONL.

9. I have considered and addressed the effects of the proposed cranes at some length in my AEE report and statement of evidence, acknowledging that they would be prominent, would change the skyline of Northport, and would have an impact on perception of the port, its shoreline and nearby areas. This would reduce the appeal and amenity value of some cross-harbour views from the general vicinity of Reotahi and Lort Point, including at night-time with additional lighting. In this regard, it should also be noted that the Moderate (expansion area alone) and Mid-High (cumulative) effects ratings attributed to the Reotahi viewpoints, together with the Moderate-High ratings identified for the Mid-Harbour viewpoint near the harbour entrance arose primarily from the in-filling of most of Marsden Point Bay by Berths 4 and 5. The high profile and visual presence of the STS cranes also contributed to these ratings, albeit to a lesser degree.
10. Focusing directly on those cranes, it remains my opinion that they would mainly affect perception of Marsden Point's coastline, much less so the landscape and coastal values of the majority of the harbour and Whangarei Heads – including Mt Aubrey, Lort Point and Motukaroro Island. In my opinion, the contrast between both sides of the harbour is already very marked and the profile of the STS cranes would, in the future, be unmistakably associated with the heavily modified and industrialised environment of Marsden Point. They would not change the fundamental nature of either that landscape (at Marsden Point) or the ONL landscape of Mt Aubrey – notwithstanding the narrowing of the harbour entrance in that area. In my opinion, the values of that ONL would remain intact, irrespective of the introduction of the STS cranes and other proposals to the port / Channel Infrastructure environment. I therefore remain of the opinion that the expansion proposal is consistent with Policies 13(1) and 15 of the NZCPS, as indicated in my evidence.
11. Secondly, regarding proposed container stacks, it is my understanding that the container handling equipment that Northport is proposing to purchase and use at Northport can only operate to a height of 5 to, at most, 6 containers. Even so, Northport has decided to retain a 30m height limit across all of the port for all port structures apart from its cranes, light towers and chipped wood loader. I also note that container stacks closer to the 30m limit would still be lower than the current chip loader, some chip stacks, the proposed STS cranes, and the fuel storage tanks and infrastructure of the Channel Infrastructure facility. In other words, the scale of the container stacks would be less than exceptional relative to that of other structures within the industrial environs of Marsden Point.
12. Turning finally, to the issue of submissions from iwi and hapū representatives, I agree that the proposed Northport extension would have an adverse effect on the character

and values of parts of the harbour near it, most notably Marsden Point Beach and its bay, but potentially other parts of Whangarei Harbour as well. I also note that the Cultural Impact Assessment prepared by Patuharakeke report specifically addressed the issue of cultural relationships with the application site and the proposal's implications in terms of kaitiakitanga. Version 2 of that report, together with evidence from Patuharakeke, disagrees with some of my findings, notably concerning the anticipated impact of an expanded port on views from Takahiwai Marae. It also raises concerns about the effects of Berths 4 and 5 on Marsden Point Bay and Patuharakeke's "*hīkoi to Poupouwhenua Mātaitai*" – past the Channel Infrastructure facility – as well as about the industrialisation of the harbour and poupouwhenua.

13. I can only reiterate that, in my assessment, the effects of the proposed Northport expansion would still be small-scale when viewed from the vicinity of Takahiwai Road and Marae, and would have little, if any, impact on perception of the wider harbour landscape from the marae itself.
14. Conversely, in relation to the proposal's effects on Marsden Point Beach, there appears to be significant alignment between my assessment of effects and the views expressed by Patuharakeke. Overall, I consider that those effects would be of a High order, primarily because of their impact on the beach which I understand forms part of the 'processional way' for hikoi out to the Marsden Point Spit.
15. Finally, turning to the matter of the industrialisation of the poupouwhenua, it is my view that Patuharakeke are best placed to explain their values and concerns in this regard. Consequently, my only comment in this regard is that, from a landscape standpoint, I would prefer to retain a concentrated node of port and related industrial development at Marsden Point, rather than see a pepper-potting of industrial facilities up and down the harbour and/or wider coastline – in accordance with the old (2004) NZCPS maxim of concentrating new development where coastal modification has already occurred.

Stephen Brown

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