

## SUMMARY STATEMENT OF STEVE TYSON

1. My name is Steve Tyson and I live at 5 Matuku Street, Darch Point, Whangarei Heads.
2. I oppose the Northport application on the basis of increased noise, visual impact and potential impacts on marine life, including mammals.

### Noise Effects

3. The noise I currently experience from Northport is barely tolerable and at times negatively impacts my life at the current WDC district plan night-time levels of 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$  and daytime levels of 55 dB  $L_{Aeq}$ . I would not want to see the allowable maximum increase above current levels. The negative impacts that I currently experience at / around the above levels include loss of sleep and loss of enjoyment of outdoor amenity. I maintain that Northport's activities should be like other activities within the district, that is be at or below night-time levels of 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$  and daytime levels of 55 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  when measured at residential properties.
4. I read the proposed consent condition noise limits – operational noise. These would allow an increase in the noise limits to day-night (long term) of 58 dB  $L_{dn(5\text{-day})}$  and 61  $L_{dn(1\text{-day})}$  and night-time (short term) 53 dB  $L_{night(10\text{pm} - 7\text{am})}$  and 58 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$ .

Table 3 of Appendix 4 of the Marshall Day Noise Assessment notes that a noise level change of:

- 5-8 decibels will have a “moderate” impact and a “appreciable to clearly noticeable change.”
- 9-11 decibels will have a “significant” impact and a “doubling of loudness.”
- >11 decibels will have a “substantial” impact and a “more than doubling of loudness.”

Comparing apples with apples (i.e., comparing the same noise measurement units): the proposed operational night time limit will increase from 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$  to 58 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$ . At a noise level change of up to 13 decibels I shudder to think of the adverse effects on myself and the community. Even at the “lower” end of a 5-8 decibel increase there will be a noticeable change to already barely tolerable and at times intolerable levels.

5. I can think of no other activity that has special dispensation for night-time noise where it impacts residential areas. Even residents around Onerahi airport know they will get a quiet night's sleep.
6. The question I ask is why should the noise level be increased – why is it relevant that the port noise standard that has been accepted at some other ports around New Zealand is acceptable here and in this community? The RMA specifically allows for local / regional solutions to local and regional issues and their own specific, unique environments. Here we have substantial residential pre-existing development in an area of significant natural beauty. Northport already have a consent for another berth (berth 4), this was granted under the existing 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$  / 55 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  noise provisions. My understanding is that this new consent application is effectively for 1 more berth. Surely best practice can be applied and the current noise levels of 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\text{ min})}$  / 55 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  can be achieved?

7. When I look at the current WDC noise rules that the existing operation at Northport and the already consented additional berth have to operate under, which is the same conditions that Channel Infrastructure and the Refinery used to work under and that other business in the Whangarei district operate under I ask why should Northport get special treatment? An increase in allowable night-time noise level from 45 to 58 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\ min)}$  in one part of the district will have the same negative effects on residential areas as it would in any other part of the district.
8. When I look at the proposal to adopt the port noise standard, I see an increase in allowable levels and a change in the actual measurement unit itself. If my understanding of the 58 dB  $L_{dn(5\ day)}$  measurement is correct, then this is averaged over 5 days. This is too long a period to run an average over. The nature of Northport's activities is that vessels arrive, they load or unload and leave. It is not of a continuous nature. The longer the averaging period the higher the noise "peaks" can be. It is these peaks (for example when logs drop into the hold of a vessel) that cause the noise that disturbs the most, along with the clanging and banging from the machinery that loads the logs. Fifteen-minute averaging periods are more appropriate (as the current noise standard measurement advises).
9. I think about the Refinery – for decades the Refinery operated under the current 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\ min)}$  / 55 dB  $L_{Aeq\ min}$  noise provisions within the District Plan. For at least the last 20 yrs the Refinery, LVL and Northport all operated within the current 45 dB  $L_{Aeq(15\ min)}$  / 55 dB  $L_{Aeq}$  noise provisions. Refining operations have now ceased at Channel Infrastructure so there is capacity within the existing noise envelope to accommodate an increase in noise from Northport.
10. I also have concerns that if the Port Noise Standard is adopted now by way of consent conditions and the proposed expansion doesn't occur, or takes some years to occur then we could see a substantial increase in operational noise immediately even without berth 4 being created or any other development occurring.
11. This is my reasoning as to why the noise controls should stay as they are. I find the current noise levels barely tolerable and at times myself and others in our household have disrupted sleep.
12. I then look at the mitigation factors being offered by Northport if the port noise standard is adopted. Primarily the installation of air conditioning units on up to 10 properties per year.
13. I have taken multiple steps at my own expense to cope with the existing noise from Northport. This has included the installation of a heat pump so we can have cooling in summer because on a noisy night you just cannot have your windows open, installation of gib noiseline and soundproof insulation in the bedroom that was most exposed to the Northport noise, double glazing of the windows in the same bedroom. Most recently, just this year, I had double glazing installed to all other bedroom windows. Despite upgrading the noise control measures in my house, I am still adversely affected at current noise levels.
14. I consider the mitigation offer of up to 10 heat pumps per year for impacted residents. Basically, if you want to have a quiet night in the summer you sit inside with the windows closed and the aircon going. I bought a property in Reotahi as I wanted to be by the sea and I enjoy the

outdoors. I deliberately chose a property that could not see the Refinery and was not looking directly at Northport. During my due diligence process of visiting the property on several occasions I didn't notice any undue port noise. I was disappointed when we had our first calm nights or when the wind was blowing from the SW. Anyway, I bought by the sea so I could enjoy the outdoors. I see no mitigation for the outdoor amenity for impacted residents. Because, if the port noise standard is adopted there cannot be any mitigation for outdoor noise effects at those limits. You go inside and close the windows and doors. As the WDC noise expert outlined during the Northport plan change attempt last year, noise at that level could be like living next to a busy main road. No-one lives out at Reotahi to be near a busy main road.

### **Visual Effects**

15. The STS cranes have been described in the application as having a vertical storage height of 106.5 metres. These will be visually imposing, especially on the seaward edge of the wharf. At around 100 m high this is similar in height to the Channel Infrastructure A block stack. This stack is the large red and white striped single stack that sits well back from the coast and yet is still visually dominating from certain angles. Nowhere in the Northport application could I see a visual representation of what a 100 m high structure on the edge of the wharf would look like.

### **Effects on Marine Mammals – NZ Fur Seal**

16. The NZ fur seal population at Reotahi Marine Reserve is increasing. Within the marine reserve, on Motukaroro Island we have seen the NZ Fur seal (Kekeno) population increase, from about 2 per season a decade ago, to at least 26 this year. They are increasing by at least 2 per season, although this last year has seen a notable increase. We now regularly see NZ fur seals swimming in our bay at Darch Point.
17. Will they be impacted? I am not a marine mammal expert so I don't know. I certainly know the ones that I have seen fishing under the Northport wharf and around the public fishing jetty will be. I did note that in the Northport application documents that noise effects on seals out to 700 metres was identified. The Motukaroro Marine Reserve is less than 500 m from the proposed reclamation and certainly seals foraging in the marine environment towards Northport will be within 500 m.

### **Summary**

18. I maintain that the adoption of the Port Noise Standard is inappropriate for the Whangarei Heads and Marsden Cove environment and that the existing noise rules within the WDC district plan should prevail and remain in place for Northport's current and future operations. I do not believe that the assessment of environmental effects adequately considered the visual effects of the proposed activity, in particular the height of the folded cranes at 106.5 metres. Nor did it consider the effects on marine mammals at the nearby Reotahi Marine Reserve, in particular the Kekeno.