

1.0 TECHNICAL MEMO – TRANSPORT

To:	Stacey Sharp & Blair Masefield, Beca (consultant planners)
From:	Robert Inman, Associate Transport Engineer, Beca
Date:	20 July 2023

1.2 Statement of Qualifications and Experience

Robert (BA (Hons) Geography) is an Associate Transport Engineer at Beca working in the Transport Advisory Team. He has 17 years’ experience in the field of traffic engineering, road safety, transport design and coordination. He has worked as the traffic operation advisor for the construction of the St. Mary’s Bay Outfall project and Plan change for Auranga residential development near Drury and is the Traffic Lead for Ruakaka Solar Farm.

I confirm that the statements made within this memorandum are within my area of expertise and I am not aware of any material facts which might alter or detract from the opinions I express. Whilst acknowledging this consenting process is not before the Environment Court, I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as set out in the Environment Court practice note. The opinions expressed in this memorandum, are based on my qualifications and experience, and are within my area of expertise. If I rely on the evidence or opinions of another, my statements will acknowledge that.

2.0 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Applicant's Name:	Northport Limited (Northport)
Activity type:	Land Use (s9), Coastal Permit (s12), Water Permit (s14), Discharge Permit (s15)
Purpose description:	Northport seek to construct, operate, and maintain an expansion of the existing port facility to increase freight storage and handling capacity, and transition into a high-density container terminal.
Application references:	Northland Regional Council: APP.005055.38.01 Whangārei District Council: LU2200107
Site address:	Ralph Trimmer Drive, Marsden Point, Whangārei

3.0 SITE AND PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

3.1 Site and Environmental Setting

A description of the subject site and surrounding environment was provided in section 4.0

of the Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE) entitled: *Application for resource consents for the expansion of Northport*, prepared by Reyburn & Bryant, dated 6 October 2021.

I am familiar with the area and have visited in March 2023, however a site visit will be required in the next few weeks to review the whole corridor and site. I concur with that description of the site and surrounding environment and adopt that description for the purpose of this assessment.

3.2 Proposal

The proposal is as described in section 3.0 of the AEE and depicted on the design drawings attached as Appendix 3 of the application (referenced in Section 2.3 below).

I adopt that description for the purpose of this assessment and note the following key elements of the proposal with regard to transport matters:

- Operational traffic – Changes will be required at key intersections and triggers are provided as conditions to mitigate increased risk to users as traffic volumes increase
- Management measures – Proposed to reduce traffic volumes and avoid peaks where possible to reduce risk exposure and delay for general traffic and vulnerable users
- Construction traffic – proposed to operate in the off peaks as part of the above management measures.

Reference documents

The following application documents have been reviewed and inform this technical memorandum.

Application

- Assessment of Environmental Effects entitled: *Application for resource consents for the expansion of Northport*, prepared by Reyburn & Bryant, dated 6 October 2021 (henceforth referred to as AEE)
- Design Drawings entitled: *Northport – Proposed Reclamation and Dredging*, prepared by WSP, sheets C01 – C04, plan set dated 18 August 2022
- Appendix 27 *Traffic Impact Assessment Northport Development in Whangarei*, prepared by WSP, 31 August 2022.

s92 Request for Information

- Further information response prepared by Nerissa Harrison, dated 25th January 2023 (henceforth referred to as s92 Transport Response).
- Further information response prepared by Northport, dated 21st February 2023

(henceforth referred to as s92 Northport Response).

4.0 REASON FOR CONSENT

4.1 Reasons for Consent

A list of resource consents sought (as per the application documents as lodged) are summarised in Sections 1.5 – 1.7 of the AEE and are as amended by the s92 Response.

4.2 Overall Activity Status

Overall, the resource consent is considered as a **Discretionary Activity**.

5.0 TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION AND EFFECTS

5.1 Assessment of Effects on the Environment

The following effects have been identified and assessed by WSP:

- Operational effects of the expansion of the port on the transport network
- Construction effects

I broadly agree with the methodology and approach used in the Traffic Impact Assessment.

I agree that upgrades will be required at the following three key intersections when certain capacity triggers are met, to manage the adverse operational and safety effects along SH15, identified in the Traffic Impact Assessment:

- SH15/One Tree Point/McCathie Road intersection
- SH15/Marsden Point Road intersection
- SH15/Marsden Bay Drive/Rama Road Intersection

I agree with the assessment that Northport will contribute to these intersection upgrades.

However, I recommend changes to the monitoring of the surrounding road network and the inclusion of Level of Service (LOS) criteria as well as volume trigger

I also recommend monitoring crashes along SH15 and at key intersections and speed monitoring along SH15, given the high speed nature of the state highway and that speed was a contributing factor to 14 of the crashes including speeding and loss of control

I recommend further mitigation is required to address safety concerns at intersections and along SH15, including the adequacy of mechanism and implementation of traffic volume reduction by 20%. Further consideration is required of the connection to the future Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle trail that is proposed along SH15 at and to the north of the Marsden Bay Road, along with pedestrian facilities as demand increases. The proposal to transfer 8% of container trucks to rail from 2028 is also unrealistic as this has not been

committed to and therefore is not expected to be completed by this date. The WSP s92 response has stated this will result in an additional 48 trucks per day and may “trigger threshold volumes stated in the TIA”...“earlier than currently forecast”.

Baseline

The TIA¹ reports the traffic volumes between October and December in 2019 (pre-Covid) on SH15 (Port Marsden Highway) between Marsden Point Road and Rama Road was 4,363 vehicles per day, of which 20% were heavy vehicles.

Safety

The WSP Traffic Impact Assessment included the following safety risk details:

- A crash period of 5 years between 2016 and 2020
- Assessment area of the intersections and 100m radius
- Crash Risk Assessment for SH15 with crash rate increase estimate of 0.01 additional injury crashes per year.

An updated safety assessment was requested through the Council s92 process to incorporate the most recent crash data and to provide an assessment of the entire length of SH15 within the assessment. Further, it was requested that the safety of the intersections be assessed using typical transport industry design guidance standards (Austroads: Guide to Road Design Part 44A: Unsignalised and Signalised Intersections) given these are all priority controlled and a greater likelihood for safety issues to arise as traffic volumes increase, particularly right turns from side roads.

An updated safety assessment was undertaken by WSP to include crash data for 2021 and 2022, to include the entire length of SH15 the updated assessment was 6 years between 2017 and 2022. The updated safety assessment shows a increase in crashes from a total of 12 crashes to 33 crashes mainly due to the increase in the assessment area. It also showed two additional serious crashes that were not captured by the previous assessment. The increase in the number of accidents appear to be because the original assessment was limited to the target intersections and excluded the midblock of SH15. The two additional serious crashes were as follows:

- Marsden Bay Drive /SH15 intersection involving a SUV failing to give way and hitting a cyclist in April 2021. The driver turned left into the path of the cyclist.
- SH15 - 495m north of the Salle Road intersection. It was a head on a bend involving a car and a ute in November 2019.

It is also noted that the details of the minor crashes were excluded. Although they are minor in outcome, minor crashes can help highlight safety risks of a corridor and incident hotspots. Examples of minor crash hotspots include the McCathie Road intersection, two of the bends on the SH15 corridor (one being near the bridge over Ruakaka River) and Marsden Bay

¹ TIA, page 8

Drive intersection. Considering minor crash risks can also help reduce the likelihood of more severe incidents as traffic volumes are expected to increase, turning opportunities reduce and driver patience is challenged and therefore take more risks.

The TIA crash risk assessment concludes that the 0.01 reported injury crashes per year increase is less than minor i.e.. one additional crash over the next 20 years. However, it is expected that this does not include the additional mid-block crashes as the injury crash rate have not been adjusted as part of the s92 response.

I recommend that additional measures are required in order to mitigate the safety concerns along SH15 and at key intersections. These include a recommendation to monitor crashes along SH15 and at key intersections and these conditions are described in Section 7. I further recommend speed monitoring along SH15 given the high-speed nature of the state highway and that speed was a contributing factor to up to 14 of the 32 the crashes.

In my opinion, with the recommended conditions, the potential adverse traffic safety effects can be appropriately mitigated to acceptable levels.

Intersection Safety

The following intersections were assessed using Austroads, ASD (Approach Sight Distance), SISD (Safe Intersection Sight Distance) and MGSD (Minimum Gap Sight Distance).

- SH15/One Tree Point/McCathie Road intersection
- SH15/Marsden Point Road intersection
- SH15/Marsden Bay Drive/Rama Road Intersection
- SH15/Mair Road

The intersections comply with these ASD, SISD and MGSD standards however, for SH15/Marsden Point Road intersections and SH15/Marsden Bay Drive/Rama Road intersections, the minimum gap sight distance may at times be obscured by traffic turning left on the SH15 exit left slip lanes. These help vehicle deceleration to the side of the main corridor, improving the main line efficiency. However, this also encourages higher vehicle speed on the corridor and potential higher severity in the event of a crash. It is also stated that neighbouring property is used as part of the sight line assessment in places. This is expected to become more of a risk on the corridor as the neighbouring land is developed.

On SH15/One Tree Point/McCathie Road intersection, the McCathie Road approach sightlines are just met to the west. This, in combination with the eastbound deceleration lane into One Tree Point Road and multiple off-set turning movements with One Tree Point Rd, raises the risk and likelihood of a crash.

The measures above will also mitigate the safety concerns along SH15 and at key intersections. These include a recommendation to monitor crashes along SH15 and at key intersections and these conditions are described in Section 7.

If these recommended conditions are implemented then the traffic effects from the

expansion of the Port can be satisfactorily mitigated.

Mitigation Measures to reduce traffic volumes

The TIA identifies that a 20% reduction of port traffic is needed on SH15 to ensure the critical intersections perform at an acceptable Level of Service “D” in year 2040 and the trigger volumes set out in Table Two of the conditions aren’t exceeded. Measures to reduce the traffic are therefore important.

A range of options to reduce traffic by 20% are suggested as Advice Notes in the draft conditions. These options include implementing a vehicle booking system for container trucks, encouraging the supply chain to operate 7 days a week, encouraging mode sharing for staff, and moving freight to rail when available. I do not consider these options have appropriate weight as Advice Notes given the importance of reducing traffic on SH15 as set out in the TIA. If the 20% reduction in traffic were not achieved, there could be further ramifications for road user safety with higher traffic volumes. I recommend that these should be incorporated as specific conditions and there is a requirement to prepare Operational Traffic Management Plans to require implementation.

I recommend a management plan should be prepared to ensure the measures to reduce traffic are given appropriate weight given their importance to reduce traffic. I have recommended a condition to prepare a Port Site Travel Management Plan as described in Section 7.

I consider that with this recommended condition, that will give effect to the implementation of a Port Site Travel Management Plan to – reduce volumes of traffic to mitigate some of the risks on the state highway. The increased traffic effects should also be further considered as part of the intersection LOS and delay assessments which will enable the intersections to perform satisfactorily.

Assessment of Cruise Ship operational effects within the site and on external transport network

It is forecast that 30 cruise ships per year, within the next 20 years, averaging 1,500 people per ship will visit the Port. I have assumed that most cruise ship visitors will be transported by bus to their respective destinations. It is presumed that 30 coaches would be required to serve a cruise ship of 1,500 people.

The TIA does not adequately assess the on or off-site effects of the large numbers of coaches required to transport cruise ship passengers. No assessment was provided of the impact of 30 coaches arriving and departing the Port to serve the cruise ships or what routes they would likely use, nor potential facilities required to accommodate the additional taxi movements anticipated. Further, the on-site operation of the coaches and taxis with the existing Port operations was not assessed. It is my opinion that the impacts of 30 coaches arriving and departing in convoy has the potential to have a growing impact on the network from a safety and performance perspective. The effects of the coaches has not been assessed as part of the port operation or the effects on SH15, with coaches passing through Ruakaka township. I believe mitigation is required to address these potential transport impacts.

The draft conditions do not provide appropriate mitigation to address these impacts. An Advice Note is recommended which has an option of timing of cruise ships transport outside of the peak periods to reduce traffic volume effects on peak times. The focus being on reducing traffic volumes and the transport effects of large numbers of cruise passengers associated with the Port, should be adequately managed both on and off site and the routes avoid Ruakaka township.

I recommend a management plan should be prepared to address the transport effects, both within the site, and on the surrounding transport network. I have suggested a condition to include Cruise Ship operations as part of the Port Site Travel Management Plan as described in Section 7.

I consider that with this recommended condition, that will give effect to the implementation of a Cruise Ship Management Plan the effects can be satisfactorily managed and mitigated.

Existing and Future Walking and Cycling routes

The TIA concluded that there are no existing specific cycle facilities on the key roads and given the rural environment, 100km/hr speed limit on SH15 and high volume of heavy trucks it isn't suitable for either pedestrians or cyclists.

However, it should be acknowledged that future cycle networks are being planned close to the Northport. Whangarei District Council have published the "Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle trail route investigation and design report" April 2022. Part of the proposed cycle trail follows Mair Road to join SH15 and then proposed to run alongside SH15 as an unsealed path. This route provides a connection between Waipu, Ruakākā and Marsden Cove communities. The report identifies the need for a dedicated crossing point to allow cyclists to safely cross SH15 and also discusses informal alternative routes in this section. It is noted that there was also an additional route for the cycle route to bypass SH15 and connect at Rama Road and cross SH15 at Marsden Bay Drive/Rama Road intersection.

This planned cycle route would provide opportunities for people who live in these communities and work at Northport to have a choice to cycle to work. However, there would need to be a safe cycle connection between the Mair Road intersection and Northport (approximately 600m) or any other connection proposed. The TIA also acknowledges that the surrounding area will see an increase in population with people living and working locally and an increase of 100 staff travelling to Northport.

In order to promote sustainable travel modes and to provide more choice in how people travel to work, I recommend a condition which provides for the investigation and implementation of a safe active mode connection between Mair Road, or another local connection point, and Northport if the Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle trail route is implemented in the future. This condition is discussed in Section 7.

I consider that with the recommend conditions given to provide more travel choice and promote sustainable travel modes in the future the impact will allow the transport effects to be satisfactorily managed and mitigated.

Road Based Construction Effects

The TIA states that construction is expected to be undertaken predominantly using water-based methods. It also states that there is expected to be some temporary impacts associated with land-based works, which will include minor increases in heavy vehicle volumes moving construction supplies to and from site. Although described as minor number of trucks, an estimation of the number of heavy vehicles was not provided nor was an assessment of these vehicle movements on the surrounding road network undertaken.

Notwithstanding, I agree that the condition requiring the preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will mitigate any adverse transport effects during construction and there is a requirement to provide the estimated numbers, frequencies, routes and timing of construction traffic movements.

I have reviewed the condition and measures which must be included in the CTMP. I recommend that this condition should be updated to take into account the following matters be reflected as specific measures that must be included in the CTMP:

I recommend that during construction Marsden Point Road should not be used (under normal traffic conditions) by heavy vehicles to access the Northport site to reduce risk exposure to local residents in the Ruakaka township. Heavy vehicles must use SH15 to access the Northport site from SH1.

Measures to manage the safe operation of cruise ships during construction including identifying construction routes through the site, safe pedestrian routes between the ships and transport should also be included in the CTMP as a specific measure.

The proposed CTMP should also take into account any impacts of the location of the Te Araroa walking trail which currently traverses the site of the reclamation and includes the ferry crossing point to Reotahi Bay during construction. The Technical Memo prepared by Mr Craig Jones of Visitor Solutions addresses this issue.

Further, it is recommended that the CTMP Condition is updated to take account the following general matters:

The CTMP must be prepared:

- By a suitably qualified and experienced person
- In accordance with Council's requirements for CTMPs (as applicable) and New Zealand Transport Authority's Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management (if applicable)
- In consultation with Waka Kotahi as they are responsible for managing the State Highways.

Assumptions of transfer of containers from road to rail

The TIA and s92 makes the assumption that 8% of container trucks will transfer to rail. The 8% figure was provided by Northport and was reported as a worldwide trend. The s92 response also states that KiwiRail have expectations that 80% of North Auckland freight would go by rail to West Coast distribution centre so the 8% value could be a low estimation

of the number of trucks that will transfer to rail.

A Detailed Business Case (DBC) and some land purchase for the new 19km rail link (Marsden Point Rail Link) connecting Northport with the existing North Auckland Line at Oakleigh is currently being progressed. The Marsden Point Rail Link project is subject to joint Ministers' approval of the DBC and is expected to take up to five years from initiation to completion.²

The development of the Business Case has been considered by the KiwiRail Board and is now progressing through the next process with Government stakeholders³.

The 8% of container trucks transferring to rail has been applied from year 2028 which I consider an optimistic timeframe for rail to be operating in 5 years' time considering the project has not been approved.

WSP have calculated that the daily increase in trucks is 48 trucks per day at full build out if rail does not occur. The mitigation being the threshold trigger volumes if the rail does not occur in the time period. However, if the transfer to rail is greater than 8% then the trigger forecast may be reached later. As mentioned previously, I would recommend a Level of Service approach for measuring the performance of intersections rather than volumes along the SH15.

Moving freight to rail, when it becomes available, is an Advice Note of Condition 33 and one of the options available to ensure the traffic volumes are reduced and contribute towards achieving the 20% reduction in traffic on SH15.

Given the importance of the transfer of freight to rail, I recommend a condition which requires Northport to use the proposed Marsden Point Rail Link when it is operational. This will ensure the transfer of freight from the road to the rail occurs when it is available. I have recommended a condition in Section 7.

Volume Triggers Approach

The assessment in the TIA refers to the importance of the intersections needing to achieve a "Level of Service (LOS) D". However, there are no corresponding conditions to assess and monitor these intersections to see whether or not an upgrade is required. Instead, what has been suggested is a volume trigger approach. The traffic volume trigger approach is more appropriate when measuring volumes on the mid-block rather than assessing how an intersection is performing.

The gap in the volume trigger approach is that it does not measure performance of the intersection. This means that queue length and time delays on the side roads intersecting SH15 will not be captured. If there are delays to vehicles trying to access SH15, and more traffic on SH15, then there may be a greater likelihood of drivers risking smaller gaps in

² <https://www.kiwirail.co.nz/assets/Uploads/documents/Annual-reports/2022/KiwiRail-Integrated-Report-2022.pdf> (page 43)

³ KiwiRail submission #182, David Gordon, COO, 14 December 2022

traffic and being involved in crashes.

I consider a more appropriate mechanism for monitoring the performance at key intersections, and deciding whether or not an upgrade is required, is a Level of Service (LOS) approach. The LOS approach to monitor intersections has been used in Rule MCP-REQ3 for the Marsden City Precinct is part of the WDC Operative District Plan (in part), linking to an information requirement to prepare an ITA for any development with Marsden City⁴.

Rule MCP-REQ3 of the Operative District Plan relates to the SH15/One Tree Point Road intersection – which is one of the key intersections, associated with development in Marsden City. This rule sets out the performance standards for the intersection and a requirement to include an assessment detailing whether an upgrade to this intersection is required to:

- Maintain Level of Service (LOS) D or better
- Queues not extending to or through upstream intersections
- Restrict queues from coming within any location where sight distance cannot be achieved
- Have a degree of saturation for individual traffic movements no higher than 95%.

Recommended wording is provided in Section 8 for revised conditions to achieve this outcome, which will better mitigate the safety effects and adopt a consistent monitoring regime to that established in the District Plan.

Assessment Approach

The overarching assumption in the TIA is that the network will function better due to the growth of local traffic reducing the overall percentage contribution of heavy vehicles. The TIA states that in 2018 the total port traffic was 64% of total SH15 traffic and that this ratio is expected to reduce significantly in the future following the planned residential development surrounding SH15. The TIA estimates that the ratio of port traffic to total SH15 traffic will be approximately 30% in year 2033 (3,290/10,944) and 26% (3,608/13,666) in year 2040.

However, Northport will still add a significant amount of traffic to SH15. The TIA states that at full expansion, the additional port traffic on SH16 will be 806 trips per day.⁵

Therefore, I recommend a condition that monitors safety and trend of minor crashes and traffic volume growth over time, along with intersection Level of Service (LOS) performance.

Recommended conditions of consent are detailed in Section 7.0 below.

4 <https://www.wdc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/services/property/planning/district-plan/operative/pt3/precincts.pdf>

⁵ TIA page 15

Level of Service of Intersection

The 2033 operation of each of the intersection is at LOS D or better for all approaches, except for Marsden Bay Road approach, which has a LOS E in the AM peak. With the additional growth of 3% per annum up to 2040, each of the other side roads LOS reduces to LOS E or F except Salle Road and McCathie Road in at least one of the peaks.

Traffic Modelling Assumptions

The Whangarei Traffic Model used for future traffic volumes is not clear about what is/isn't included in terms of development. The Port completion is expected in 2033 and a 3% per annum growth rate to 2040 is provided, but when thresholds may be met and interventions are needed is not provided.

The TIA⁶ states that the 2017 network modelling from Stantec has confirmed that in 2043, the population of Marsden/Ruakaka would be 8,348. Interpolation of the latest 2020 land use growth by Stantec between 2018 and 2043 has shown that similar volumes (8,416) will be experienced in 2033. Therefore, to be conservative, WSP have assumed that full Northport expansion will occur by 2033 and we agree with this approach.

Conclusion

WSP conclude subject to mitigation, construction traffic effects will be no more than minor, and that operational traffic effects will also be no more than minor until the peak hourly intersection volumes exceed identified thresholds. I agree with these conclusion and overall, conclude that, subject to conditions, the actual and potential adverse effects of the proposal will be satisfactorily managed.

6.0 TECHNICAL RESPONSE TO MATTERS RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS

I note a total of 34 submissions have been received and eight transport matters have been raised by submitters which I have discussed below.

6.1 Provision of Active Mode Facilities, Connections and Providing Travel and Mode Choices

The relevant submissions are numbers 28, 31, 153, 159, 164 and 184. Submissions # 28 and #31 requests a cycleway to be created alongside SH15 between the SH1 roundabout and Northport. The Waka Kotahi (#153) submission seeks safe facilities for people cycling that connect to future cycle routes namely between Mair Road and Northport.

The Ruakaka Residents and Ratepayers Incorporated (RR&R) submission (#159) asks that the port should connect to the cycleway currently being developed from One Tree Point to Ruakaka to encourage staff to safely run or cycle to work. It is assumed that the RR&R submission is referring to the Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle trail that WDC is

⁶ TIA, page 4

currently progressing⁷.

The Patuharekeke Te Iwi Trust Board submission (#164) states we should be aiming to restore opportunities to walk or cycle to work or school and requests as a first step that Northport join the newly formed Ruakākā / One Tree Point Cycleway Focus Group and find ways to support the initiative.

The WDC Parks and Recreation department team (#184) is concerned with the missed opportunity to provide pedestrian and cycle connections between Northport and the wider Ruakaka/Marsden area. This submitter identifies a future walkway connecting Waipu and Ruakākā areas as shown in the 2018 WDC Walking and Cycling Strategy⁸.

Future cycle routes between Waipu and Marsden Cove are being considered by WDC. The proposed Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle route proposes to run alongside SH15 between Mair Road and Marsden Bay Drive intersections for approximately 850m.

As discussed in Section 5, I recommend a condition which provides for the investigation and implementation of a safe cycle connection on SH15 between Mair Road and Northport if the Waipu to Marsden Cove Marina cycle trail route is implemented in the future. This will provide travel choices and encourage Northport staff to safely cycle or run to work. The proposed condition is discussed in Section 7 and I consider this will address these transport matters raised by Waka Kotahi and RRR and partly address the concerns of WDC Infrastructure team.

Waka Kotahi, who manage SH15, has stated that it is not expected for Northport to provide a safe walking and cycling environment network for the entire length of SH15. I agree with this and is not required to address the impacts of the project.

6.2 Cruise Ship Operations

Patuharekeke Te Iwi Trust Board submission (#164) also raises concerns over the suggestion in the TIA that cruise ship passengers should disembark during off-peak periods only however there is no clarity whether this is possible in regard to cruise ship scheduling. A requirement for cruise ships to disembark during off-peak periods is recommended as part of the Cruise Ship Management Plan.

WDC Infrastructure are concerned about the cruise ship operations and seek that visitors have a positive and safe experience at Northport. The submitter is concerned with adequate processing areas and amenities, that these are accessible and transport connections. It is recommended WDC request more detailed plans and determine conditions.

As mentioned above a condition to include Cruise Ship operations as part of the Port Site Travel Management Plan is recommended and discussed in Section 7. This will include the

⁷ <https://www.wdc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/services/roads-trans/paths/waipu-marsden-cove-marina-cycle-trail.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.wdc.govt.nz/files/assets/public/documents/council/strategies/walking-and-cycling-strategy.pdf> page 32

issues mentioned in this submission and address these transport connection concerns.

6.3 Construction Impacts

WDC Infrastructure (#184) are concerned with the impact of construction on the Te Araroa Trail and the experience and safety of cruise ship passengers during construction.

The proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan should take into account any impacts of the location of the Te Araroa trail. It is recommended that the CTMP should be updated to include these as matters to be included in the CTMP. It is considered that an updated CTMP will address the concerns of this submitter.

6.4 Safety of the transport network

Relevant submissions: 153, 160, 184, 242

Ruakaka Residents and Ratepayers – Existing McCathie Rd/One Tree Point Rd intersection already problematic from- a safety perspective and the nearby retirement village is growing fast. Work should begin immediately to mitigate safety concerns. The reduction of speed should be considered in the area as visibility is restricted to the west from McCathie Road. The multiple lane arrangement on SH15 and turning vehicle movements increases the risk and likelihood of a collision.

Safety concern at Marsden Point Road / SH15 intersection despite recent speed restrictions along Marsden Point Road there are still a significant number of trucks turning from this road onto SH15. Fully laden trucks with restricted visibility turning onto SH15 gathers speed slowly with oncoming traffic at 100km/hr. Suggestion of a slip lane or shoulder widening. It is recommended that speeds be reduced through multiple approaches. Providing additional lanes are expected to increase local vehicle speed, increasing the likelihood and severity of a collision.

Submission # 164 from the Patuharekeke Te Iwi Trust Board highlights the fatal crash at the Rama Road/SH15 intersection in 2018 and in April 2021 a child from the Trust was almost killed cycling on local roads close to Marsden Point Road/SH15.

As mentioned above proposed conditions to monitor safety at intersections and speed

I would recommend that the number of heavy vehicles using Marsden Point Road (between SH1 and SH15) is monitored and included as a condition of consent. This route could be used as an alternative to SH15 when vehicles are accessing the Port

The lack of rail link will increase the number of heavy truck movements which goes against the “Road to Zero” policy and GPS ‘Improving Freight Connections’ strategic priority. A vision where everyone, whether they’re walking, cycling, driving, motorcycling or taking public transport, can get to where they’re going safely. Increase in trucks will incur more cost to taxpayers from road maintenance, accidents, injuries and deaths (160).

6.5 Congestion as a result of Increase in Traffic from Port Expansion / Efficiency of transport network

Relevant submissions: 12, 28, 58, 64, 74, 106, 153, 184, 186, 208, 216

The referenced submissions raise general concerns regarding increased truck traffic will be detrimental (12) and cause congestion on roads and at intersections (28). Port expansion will further increase traffic on SH1 (74) making it slow and unsafe and request upgrades.

Existing roading infrastructure can't cope with the increased truck movements, Need the promised 4-lane highway (Four laning on State Highway 1 between Whangārei and Port Marsden Highway).

I consider that the suggested conditions that will monitor the impact of the traffic from the port expansion on SH15 and the performance of the intersections will address this concern.

6.6 Transport emissions / Low Carbon Emission / Climate Change

Relevant submissions: 92, 153, 160, 215

- Lack of Marsden Point Rail Link will mean increased truck volumes between Auckland and Whangarei and thereby increasing transport and carbon emissions (92, 154, 160)
- Provision of safe active modes will help reduce emissions. However, noting the RMA precludes us from considering emissions there is limited scope to consider this matter.
- Note that the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport states that "over time, increasing movements of freight by lower emissions transport modes, such as rail and coastal shipping, will reduce emissions and pollutants" (GPS on Land Transport 2021 – 2031 Strategic Priority: Improving Freight Connections Co-benefits)

6.7 Marsden Point Rail Link

Relevant submissions: 50, 92, 95, 116, 127, 134, 160, 210, 215, 216, 221

- Lack of Marsden Point Rail Link will increase truck volumes between Auckland and Whangarei.
- Support for it, improved rail link essential for expanded port, will take trucks off road
- Benefit of rail link – will provide resilience for network (check) AHB (106)
- Bream head Conservation Trust – suggested condition that construction of the rail link is commenced prior to the commencement of the port expansion. Submitter 210 also suggested that rail (and road) infrastructure should be constructed and commissioned before Northport expansion., and others.
- The KiwiRail submission (#182) highlights that when available, rail freight is taken up at high rates to help achieve both a reduction in carbon emissions and congestion and to improve road safety.
- It is noted that Northport is dependent on the delivery of the rail link by others and can not control when it will be available for use. The condition suggested above that

when it is available it will be use. I recommend that this condition also includes KiwiRail and Northport working together to ensure the uptake is at a higher rate as possible.

6.8 Port Expansion will provide impetus for transport infrastructure improvements

Relevant submissions: 15, 41, 50, 58, 64, 95, 106, 208, 210, 215

The comment issues raised most in the submission was the belief that the port expansion will provide the impetus for wider transport improvements. It is noted that no transport improvements are proposed by Northport as part of the port expansion. The approach is that the surrounding roads and intersections will be monitored and then upgraded if certain triggers are met and there are conditions to this effect.

As mentioned above there is a commitment by the Government to provide the Marsden Rail Link and this has been prioritised over 4-laning of the state highway. The delivery of the rail link is outside of Northport’s control. However, conditions have been recommended that when it is available to use, Northport will use it and work with KiwiRail to make sure rail freight is taken up at high rates.

6.9 Lack of transport infrastructure upgrades / Need to upgrade the roads

Relevant submissions: 210, 215

It is noted that no transport improvements are proposed by Northport as part of the port expansion. The approach is that the surrounding roads and intersections will be monitored and then upgraded if certain triggers are met and there are conditions to this effect. The TIA acknowledges that upgrades will be required in the future for key intersections.

Further, conditions have been recommended that when the rail link is available to use.

6.10 Improving Freight Connections

Relevant submissions:15, 26, 41, 49, 50, 51, 58, 77, 95, 106,116

The response from local businesses were positive with a suggestion that the expansion of the port will result in local investment into infrastructure, supply chains and the local economy. Refer to the Economic Technical Memo regarding the economic elements of the project. Concerns raised regarding the traffic impacts of the development include:

- Lack of cycling facilities / links
- Safety – particularly at Safety at One Tree Point / McCathie Rd intersection AND at Marsden Point Road / SH15 intersection. Link to above and need for conditions\
- Sceptical of traffic data
- With the proposed expansion, Northport will be a significant contributor to the traffic on SH15/SH1 roundabout. Performance of this intersection (Marsden Point Road) must be monitored to avoid congestion.

7.0 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Resource Management Act 1991

Relevant statutory considerations under the RMA include:

- Regional Policy Statement for Northland
- Whangārei District Plan – Operative in Part.

7.2 Other Statutory Documents

Other relevant statutory considerations include:

- Regional Land Transport Plan for Northland (2021 – 2027)
- Whangārei District Growth Strategy (2021)
- Government Policy Statement (GPS) on land transport 2021/22 – 2030/31.

7.3 Duration and Review of Consents

The Applicant seeks 35-year durations for the regional consents.

From a land transport perspective, there are no reasons to recommend restrictions on consent duration. It is however recommended that review conditions proposed by the Applicant are retained, in addition to the conditions set out within Section 8 below.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Adequacy of information

The above assessment is based on the information submitted as part of the application. It is considered that the information submitted is sufficient to enable the consideration of the above matters on an informed basis.

8.2 Recommended Conditions and Advice Notes

Should consents be granted, the following matters are recommended to form conditions and advice notes to avoid, mitigate, or remedy environmental effects of the proposal and to implement mitigation proffered by the Applicant.

- Implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, generally as per that proposed by the Applicant. The CTMP is to include any restrictions on construction traffic routes (including Marsden Point Road).
- Preparation of a baseline traffic monitoring report of the four key SH15 intersections identified above not less than 18 months after the commencement of the land use consents, with regular monitoring reports thereafter

- Trigger-based upgrade contributions (volume and LOS), generally as per that proposed by the Applicant
- Retention of public access from Ralph Trimmer Drive
- Not later than 12 months following commencement of the land use consents, undertake a Crash Monitoring Report for the key SH intersections to determine a trend in accidents and to identify any safety concerns as a result of Port Activities. Repeat annually for three years thereafter.
- Preparation of an Operational Site Travel Management Plan, the objectives of which shall include how traffic volumes to and from the port are to be reduced and how port traffic peaks will avoid coinciding with network peaks. The OSTMP shall include cruise ship operations.
- Investigation and implementation of safe cycle connections to promote sustainable travel modes and to provide more choice in how people travel to work.
- Utilisation of the Marsden Point Rail Link if/when it is operational to transfer freight from the road to the rail
- Continuation of regular formalised liaisons with Waka Kotahi to discuss forecast cargo and traffic peaks
- Speed monitoring of SH15.

Memo prepared by:

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Date:

28.07.2023