

## PROPOSED PORT EXPANSION

### SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE

#### STEVE MUTTON – CORPORATE

#### SUBMITTER: WAKA KOTAHI

12 OCTOBER 2023

1. My full name is Stephen John Mutton. I have prepared a statement of evidence for Waka Kotahi dated 22 September 2023. I will briefly summarise key points from my evidence.
2. I am the Director Regional Relationships Te Tai Tokerau me Tāmaki Makaurau for the Auckland and Northland region. I have qualifications and experience as set out in my evidence.
3. The statutory objective of Waka Kotahi under the LTMA is to “*undertake its functions in a way that contributes to an effective, efficient and safe land transport system in the public interest*”.<sup>1</sup>
4. Its functions include ‘to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest’; and to manage the state highway system, including planning funding, design, supervision, construction, and maintenance and operations, in accordance with the LTMA and the GRPA.<sup>2</sup> Waka Kotahi also has an interest in how local roads are managed and funded through its statutory objectives, functions and powers.
5. Waka Kotahi funding priorities are set out in the Government Policy Statement and National Land Transport Programme which looks ahead to a 10 year timeframe. Funding allocation follows a very structured approach and must do so in accordance with prescriptive strategic priorities. Competing priorities need to be balanced using investment prioritisation methods. Once the priorities are set in the NLPT and the RLTPs, it is difficult to obtain funding for additional projects that are not prioritised in those documents.
6. Arataki – Te Tai Tokerau – Northland March 2023, sets the regional direction for Northland and recognises that for efficient and effective progress, transport challenges in Te Tai Tokerau must be tackled in a cohesive way. Arataki identifies the growth of Northport as a significant opportunity. A growing role for Northport in New Zealand’s overall supply chain seems likely in the future, meaning that improved road and rail connections will be critical.

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<sup>1</sup> LTMA section 94

<sup>2</sup> LTMA sections 95(1)(a) and (g).

7. State Highway 15 (SH1 to Marsden Point) is a key freight route within the state highway network, and plays a major role in the local and regional economy. The future role for SH15 will continue to be as a major freight connection.
8. The Marsden area is also projected to receive relatively high levels of housing development and population growth. There is also a large area of undeveloped industrial land. This will also need to be factored in when considering future network improvements, including the intersection with SH 1.
9. The Northport expansion will bring benefits to the region, especially in relation to economic development. The resource consent is also complementary to and supportive of the strategic direction in Arataki, and has alignment with the GPS 2021. However, the traffic effects of the proposed expansion on the transportation network will need to be carefully managed.
10. The expansion of the port brings operational concerns in relation to four intersections which arise from a combination of the residential and industrial development projected to occur as well as additional traffic movements from the Northport expansion.
11. While Northport has indicated a willingness to fund the portion of the works attributable to its increased traffic flows from the port expansion, no funding stream has been determined or allocated for the remaining portion of the improvements. The timing of any such funding being available is not known or guaranteed and will depend on the relative prioritisation for funding from other projects in future NLTPs.
12. The traffic effects of the Northport expansion will not occur immediately and will be gradual over time. As Ms Heppelthwaite and Ms Crafer note, there are effective tools that may be implemented to ensure that the effects on the intersection are appropriately managed prior to the need for any upgrade of the intersections. Waka Kotahi is working collaboratively with Northport to manage the process for ensuring that the intersections are upgraded in a timely way when the triggers are reached.
13. Waka Kotahi supports Northport's expansion application subject to appropriate conditions being in place to ensure that safety and efficiency of the SH15 can be maintained.