

## Technical Memorandum – Fast-track Application

### WIAL Southern Seawall Renewal Project

### Earthworks/ geotechnical effects

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#### Introduction

This memo responds to a request for comment from the expert panel assessing the Wellington International Airport Limited (WIAL)'s substantive application to replace and upgrade its southern seawall, and associated activities, under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

This memo provides comments on the effects of the project on earthworks and geotechnical matters, and outlines the conditions required to ensure the safe management of earthworks and the overall stability of the site.

#### Pre-lodgement feedback on the draft application

At pre-lodgement, feedback highlighted key earthworks and geotechnical considerations, including the stability of the Eastern Bank and seawall toe, earthworks associated with the Miramar Golf Course (MGC) Construction Yard, George Bolt Street Yard, and Moa Point Construction Yard, temporary and permanent cut and fill stability, management of historic fill, coastal and intertidal construction challenges, and the need for ongoing supervision by a Chartered Professional Geotechnical Engineer (CPEng).

The draft application has addressed some of these matters by outlining site-specific mitigation measures, identifying locations for engineered fill placement, proposing ground improvement strategies, incorporating adaptive seawall design measures, and including geotechnical instrumentation and monitoring plans.

To fully satisfy the pre-lodgement recommendations, Council initially advised that these matters be managed through conditions requiring the submission and implementation of Site-Specific Erosion and Sediment Control Plans (SSESCPs), a Dust Management

Plan (DMP), and a final Geotechnical Completion Report, together with ongoing supervision and certification by a Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng).

Draft conditions were submitted by Wellington International Airport Limited (WIAL) for review. In response, Council's Earthworks team included additional draft conditions requiring the submission and implementation of a Dust Management Plan and ongoing supervision by a suitably qualified Chartered Professional Engineer to address potential adverse effects associated with earthworks.

The Dust Management Plan condition requires the consent holder to submit a site-specific DMP to Council for certification prior to the commencement of earthworks. The purpose of the plan is to manage dust effects within the airport environment and to prevent dust from leaving the site. The condition requires the DMP to address staging of works, vehicle speed controls, assessment of weather and ground conditions, availability and use of dust suppression measures, stabilisation of exposed areas, procedures for ceasing works if dust effects occur, and provision of a 24-hour site contact. The approved DMP must be implemented for the duration of the earthworks, kept on site, updated as necessary with Council certification, and supported by periodic dust monitoring records to demonstrate ongoing compliance.

The Chartered Professional Engineer supervision condition requires the consent holder to engage a suitably experienced CPEng for the detailed design, construction, and monitoring phases of the project. This condition ensures independent professional oversight of all geotechnically sensitive works, including excavation and slope stability, engineered fill placement, ground improvement works, and marine interface construction such as seawall foundations and the placement of armour rock and Cubipods. The consent holder is required to follow the advice and direction of the CPEng, provide Council with the engineer's appointment details, and notify Council of any change in engineer to ensure continuity of geotechnical oversight.

A draft Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (ESCP) was prepared by the WIAL team and submitted to Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). The ESCP was also provided to Council, which issued detailed feedback. In addition, erosion and sediment control conditions were imposed by GWRC, and Wellington City Council (WCC) agreed with GWRC's conditions, including requirements for an ESCP, Site-Specific Erosion and Sediment Control Plans (SSESCPs), Winter Works Erosion and Sediment Control Plans (WWESCPs), a Flocculation Management Plan (FMP), and a Marine Mammal Management Plan (MMMP).

WCC also agreed with WIAL and GWRC that erosion and sediment control monitoring would be undertaken by GWRC officials to avoid any conflict or confusion. However, any erosion and sediment control documentation submitted to GWRC is also required to be provided to WCC's Earthworks team for review.

### **Post-lodgement work with the applicant**

Following formal lodgement of the fast-track application to EPA, the final proposed conditions were provided to Wellington City Council (WCC) for internal review. The WCC Earthworks Team reviewed the documentation and conditions package. Overall, the submitted documentation aligns with the material initially assessed and is generally partially acceptable.

However, during this post-lodgement review process, several of the earthworks conditions that were originally recommended were either omitted or amended in the final set of conditions. In particular:

The recommended Dust Management Plan (DMP) condition (including certification requirements and detailed minimum content) was omitted; and

The recommended requirement for engagement and oversight by a Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng) across the detailed design, construction, and monitoring phases was amended, with monitoring requirements reduced to Engineering Geologist/Geotechnical Engineer oversight for cut areas only.

This resulted in a conditions package that is generally workable, but with reduced certainty around dust control (given the airport zone context) and reduced assurance around geotechnical stability for fill areas and overall earthworks completion sign-off. Following feedback provided to WIAL, the dust management conditions were included in the updated conditions set dated 30 January 2026.

### **Outstanding matters**

The following matters remained outstanding until corrected conditions, dated 30 January 2026, were submitted:

#### **Dust management certainty**

Given the airport zone environment and the scale/staging of the earthworks, a certified Dust Management Plan condition is considered necessary to ensure appropriate dust mitigation, monitoring, and compliance.

The following matters are recommended for inclusion in the condition set:

#### **Chartered Geotechnical oversight**

The current wording provides for geotechnical monitoring during excavation works (cuts). It is requested that this be strengthened to require that a suitably experienced Chartered Engineering Geologist (PEngGeol) or Chartered Professional (Geotechnical) Engineer (CPEng) is present on site at all times during excavation works, to monitor ground conditions and provide immediate direction where required.

#### **Completion certification of earthworks stability**

A completion reporting condition is required to provide Council with formal confirmation that all cut slopes and fill batters are stable and that earthworks have been completed in accordance with applicable guidelines and WCC's Code of Practice for Land Development 2025 (Part B – Earthworks).

### **Proposed conditions**

WCC is satisfied that, following the initial review comments, the applicant has incorporated the relevant SSEDCP (site specific erosion and dust control plan) conditions, and the final conditions are now largely consistent with what was requested. Overall, the conditions package is supported.

However, the following minor amendments are requested to ensure appropriate geotechnical oversight and completion assurance:

**GEO.3 – Geotechnical supervision during excavations (cuts)**

It is requested that condition **GEO.3** be amended to require that a suitably experienced **Chartered Engineering Geologist (PEngGeol)** or **Chartered Professional (Geotechnical) Engineer (CPEng)** is present on site **at all times during excavation works (cuts)**, to monitor ground conditions and provide immediate direction where required.

**Additional condition – Geotechnical Completion Report (earthworks sign-off)**

It is requested that a geotechnical completion sign-off condition be added as follows:

**Geotechnical Completion Report:**

(...) Within one (1) month of the earthworks being completed, a geotechnical completion report prepared by a suitably experienced Chartered Professional (Geotechnical) Engineer (CPEng) or an Engineering Geologist (PEngGeol) must be supplied to the Council’s Compliance Monitoring Officer.

The Geotechnical Completion Report must include:

- Confirm the completed earthworks reflect current engineering guidelines and standards, and are completed in accordance with Council’s Code of Practice for Land Development 2025 for earthworks (Part B).
- Include a statement of professional opinion that any un-retained cut slopes and fill batters are considered stable with respect to the future use, and that the risk of instability is as low as reasonably practicable.

**Other matters**

No other subject-specific matters are considered relevant to the Panel’s decision. All matters relating to earthworks and geotechnical issues have been addressed in detail above.