

Your Comment on the Wellington International Airport Southern Seawall Renewal

Please include all the contact details listed below with your comments and indicate whether you can receive further communications from us by email to substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz.

1. Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Wellington Conservation Board		
First name	████		
Last name	████		
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Home phone / Mobile phone	██████████	Work phone	
Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)	████████████████████		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can receive emails and my email address is correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct

Please provide your comments below, include additional pages as needed.

Wellington Conservation Board – comments under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

The Wellington Conservation Board acknowledges the detailed wildlife assessment prepared for the Southern Seawall Renewal Project and recognises the careful consideration given to kororā, banded dotterel, native lizards and other coastal

avifauna. The Board appreciates the identification of required approvals under the Wildlife Act 1953 and the development of an Avifauna Management Plan (AMP) and Lizard Management Plan (LMP) to manage construction-related effects.

In considering this application, the Board has had regard to the Wellington Conservation Management Strategy and the Department's Lower North Island (LNI) Strategy (April 2025). The LNI Strategy places emphasis on strengthening aquatic ecosystems, enhancing ecological connectivity, and recognising natural capital as a foundational asset underpinning environmental, social and economic wellbeing. The coastal and marine environment adjacent to the airport is part of this wider aquatic ecosystem network. As such, the project should be framed not only as an infrastructure resilience measure but also as an opportunity to enhance coastal ecological function and natural capital over the long term.

The Board supports the intent to provide improved or purpose-built habitat for kororā and to manage lizard populations appropriately. However, alignment with both the CMS and the LNI Strategy requires that the project clearly demonstrate a measurable net biodiversity gain. The applicant is encouraged to define how net gain will be assessed, including baseline ecological conditions, habitat quality metrics, breeding success indicators and long-term performance measures. Enhancement should extend beyond replacement of existing habitat to deliver improved ecological outcomes relative to the current state.

Given the anticipated construction period of up to seven years, robust long-term monitoring is essential. Monitoring frameworks should extend beyond the construction phase and incorporate adaptive management triggers. Success should be measured not only by short-term occupation of artificial habitat but by sustained breeding success, survivorship and ecosystem functionality. This is particularly important in a dynamic coastal environment influenced by climate change and sea-level rise.

The Board also emphasises the need for secure, long-term maintenance commitments. Ongoing weed and pest management, habitat maintenance, burrow integrity, and ecological oversight must be funded and enforceable for an ecologically meaningful timeframe. Importantly, dedicated and ring-fenced funding mechanisms should be identified to support monitoring and maintenance obligations, ensuring that biodiversity outcomes are not compromised by future financial constraints. If the seawall is being future proofed for climate resilience, biodiversity outcomes should be secured to the same horizon.

In line with the LNI Strategy's natural capital focus, the Board encourages the applicant to recognise the ecological enhancements as long-term environmental

assets. Investment in coastal habitat quality, species resilience and ecological knowledge contributes to the region's natural capital and supports broader environmental and community wellbeing objectives.

Overall, while the Board recognises the strategic importance of the seawall renewal, it emphasises that the project presents a significant opportunity to demonstrate leadership in integrating infrastructure resilience with enduring biodiversity enhancement. With clearly articulated net biodiversity gain objectives, long-term monitoring, secured maintenance funding and alignment with regional conservation strategy priorities, the project could deliver meaningful and lasting conservation benefits alongside infrastructure protection.

The Board looks forward to continued engagement as management plans are refined and approval conditions developed to ensure these outcomes are achieved.

Thank you for your comments