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Expert Panel for the Bream Bay Sand Extraction Project

BY EMAIL

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NORTHPORT LIMITED – COMMENT ON SUBSTANTIVE FAST-TRACK APPROVALS ACT 2024 APPLICATION FOR THE BREAM BAY SAND EXTRACTION PROJECT

Introduction and context

1. Northport Limited (“Northport”) thanks the Expert Panel for the opportunity to comment on McCallum Bros Limited’s substantive Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 application for the Bream Bay Sand Extraction project (“Application”).
2. Northport is the owner and operating company for the deep-water multi-purpose commercial cargo port located at Marsden Point in Northland. Northport is recognised as regionally significant infrastructure in Northland, and nationally, due to its commercial, transportation and infrastructure functions.
3. Northport’s comments on the Application are confined to issues relevant to its role as a port operator and administrator of the Local Port Service (“LPS”). The LPS a harbour monitoring system within Whangārei Harbour that uses radar coverage and AIS transponder transmissions to monitor vessels and craft transiting the commercial channels of Whangarei Harbour and its approaches. Accordingly, Northport’s comments extend only to navigation safety issues, and potential implications on shipping and anchorages.
4. Northport does not comment on the proposed sand extraction operations, including any benefits that may attach to this.

Navigation safety, shipping, and anchorages

5. Northport has reviewed aspects of the Application that are relevant to navigation safety, shipping, and anchorages. In particular, it has reviewed the Assessment of Navigational Safety Effects carried out by the Harbourmaster’s Department of the Northland Regional Council.¹

¹ https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/20884/19-Redacted-Attachment-Nineteen-Assessment-of-Navigational-Safety-Effects-B.Goodchild.pdf.

6. Northport broadly **supports** the Harbourmaster's assessment. Northport agrees with the Harbourmaster's assessment that the Application is compliant with maritime safety rules and will not create navigational safety issues to other users of Bream Bay, including commercial users such as Northport.
7. Northport **endorses** the guidelines referenced by the Harbourmaster to ensure navigational safety with respect to the Application's proposed operations. Northport considers that these guidelines should be encapsulated in appropriately framed conditions, should the Expert Panel determine to grant resource consents for the Application.

Potential sedimentation impacts

8. Northport's navigational safety focus extends to potential impacts of the Application on sedimentation in the commercial shipping channel. Should sedimentation occur, reducing the navigable depth within the channel, this will likely impact the conditions for safe transit and may potentially impact navigational safety for commercial shipping. Clearly, these are potential impacts that should be **avoided**.
9. For context, the Whangarei Harbour channel (including the approach and entrance) is a natural deep-water channel, which has not required dredging for 50+ years.
10. Should the Expert Panel determine to grant resource consents for the Application, Northport **says** that appropriate conditions should be attached providing for monitoring and, if necessary, management responses to sedimentation being observed within the commercial shipping channel.

Conclusion

11. Northport overall considers that the activities proposed in the Application can, from a navigational safety perspective, and in respect of impacts on shipping and anchorages, be appropriately managed.
12. Northport makes no wider comment in relation to the Application.

Yours faithfully
Northport Limited

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