

Your written comments on a project under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	Stella Passage Development (FTAA-2509-1101)
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Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)	Bay of Plenty Regional Council		
*First name	Ella		
*Last name	Tennent		
Postal address	PO Box 364, Whakatane 3158		
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a)	Alternative	0800 884 880
*Email	s 9(2)(a)		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
If you need more space, please attach additional pages. Please include your name, page numbers and the project name on the additional pages.

Note: All comments will be made available to the public and the applicant when the Ministry for the Environment proactively releases advice provided to the Minister for the Environment.

The Stella Passage proposal has undergone a lengthy process to date. An initial application to utilise the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 was not accepted, with the Government concluding that the project should proceed through the standard Resource Management Act process. In its comments on that application, the Regional Council noted that the proposal aligned with regional planning instruments, was likely to deliver significant economic and social benefits, and would require detailed assessments of ecological, hydrodynamic, and cultural effects.

Following this, Port of Tauranga applied for direct referral. The Regional Council accepted the request, recognising the project's regional and national significance, the complexity of technical and cultural issues, and the high likelihood of appeals. Direct referral to the Environment Court was considered the most efficient and transparent pathway, enabling a more streamlined process while ensuring that complex matters could be fully considered.

Proceedings in the Environment Court commenced in late 2021. In its recent decision on the judicial review of the substantive Fast-track application, the High Court said the process was “complex, heavily-contested and at the end of 2024 were still far from complete.” The Environment Court indicated it would grant conditional consent to the first stage of the Sulphur Point extension, but considered Port of Tauranga had not yet provided sufficient information to allow consent for either the Mount Maunganui extension or the second stage of the Sulphur Point extension. The Court highlighted the need for further measures to address cumulative cultural effects on Whareroa Marae and tangata whenua. It emphasised robust mitigation, monitoring, and advisory arrangements to support ongoing participation of iwi and hapū and to manage environmental and cultural values effectively.

Regional Council understands that ongoing engagement has been extensive, though acknowledges there are mixed views on the comprehensiveness and utility of discussions. The Court noted that, despite these efforts, significant relationship issues between Port of Tauranga and affected iwi and hapū remains, and the process to date has not resolved this.

While some matters remain under discussion, the project represents a significant opportunity. Any Fast-track process should enable meaningful participation of all affected tāngata whenua.

We recognise that Stella Passage is of regional and national significance, has undergone detailed scrutiny, and that a well-structured process can support effective management of technical, cultural, and environmental matters while contributing to enduring benefits for Te Awanui (Tauranga Harbour) and the wider region.

As a result of the extensive consenting history, Council has a sound comprehension of the various elements of the project, including the technical information required to understand and address the potential environmental effects, the cultural considerations associated with the Port site within Te Awanui and the immediately surrounding land, as well as the strong opposition from tangata whenua with regard to the Project.

We understand that the currently proposed applications are being advanced largely on the basis of amendments made through the Environment Court process and in response to the Court decisions on stage one of the Proposal. However, and as identified in Council’s comments to FTAA-2504-1042, given the complex nature of the Proposal, Council has engaged a number of independent experts to review the various technical reports prepared in support of the Proposal. These reviews have been provided to you as part of the feedback for the Substantive Application, and are attached to this feedback also, for completeness. It is noted that the Council engaged experts have been made available to the Applicant so that discussions can occur ‘expert to expert’ to resolve any outstanding information gaps. Several discussions between experts have occurred over the course of the processing of the Proposal and we understand that largely, the experts generally agree on the potential scale of effects on the environment and the imposition of appropriate consent conditions with regard to the technical aspects of the Proposal. A summary of the conclusions of technical reviews is appended.

We have checked our records and confirm that there are no competing applications, with regard to section 17(3)(a) of the FTAA. Similarly, there are no existing resource consents to which Section 124C(1)(c) or 165ZI of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) would apply if the Stellar Passage

Insert Fast-track logo

proposal was a resource consent application under the RMA. All current consents in the area of the Stellar Passage proposal are Port of Tauranga consents.

Ngā mihi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ella Tennent', written in a cursive style.

Ella Tennent

Consents Manager

Date 3 November 2025

Approved for release by Fiona McTavish, Chief Executive

Port of Tauranga Stella Passage Fast Track FTAA-2509-1101

Summary of Technical Reviews

Expertise	Comments
Coastal Bird – Graham Don	<p>Mr Don has concluded that the Applicant's assessment of potential effects on birds is comprehensive, addresses the issues arising from the proposed project and provides measures for mitigation and avoidance. In particular, Mr Don notes:</p> <p><i>The final management proposals regarding both red-billed gull (At Risk species) and little blue penguin (At Risk species) follow 'standard practice' and experience elsewhere; both initiatives are a positive outcome of the development and have a high probability of enhancing the local breeding success of both species.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed management of the sand pile area is appropriate.</i></p> <p>Mr Don identified a small number of matters in Section 3 of the Assessment – Monitoring, that require addressing, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>(a) the reference to 5-minute counts is unclear as it is usually employed in terrestrial bird surveys; it would be better to simply count the birds in each sector each survey;</i><i>(b) caution will be required regarding drone use and the potential to displace birds, especially birds congregated at a roost – drones represent a potential aerial predator and therefore a threat;</i><i>(c) similarly, caution is advised regarding the wearing of Hi Vis gear close to birds as it may also result in site desertion;</i><i>(d) equipment should include binoculars AND a spotting scope and,</i><i>(e) provision of an endoscope would assist with penguin surveys.</i> <p>It is understood that these matters have or will be addressed by the Applicant in the final documents.</p>
Landscape – Brad Coombs	<p>Mr Coombs has reviewed the draft Landscape and Natural Values assessment and notes that it generally follows accepted industry practice and procedures. Mr Coombs acknowledges that the assessment includes a comprehensive assessment of the history of the Site and previous engagement with tangata whenua, in particular Whareroa Marae.</p> <p>Further, Mr Coombs has provided recommendations for the Applicant to consider prior to finalisation of the assessment, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Exploration of the opportunity to offer coastal edge tree planting to the Whareroa Marae to screen or integrate future views of the</i>

	<p><i>development of the Stella Passage, should that be desirable following engagement with Whareroa Marae and Ngāti Kuku. One side effect of such planting would be to screen views of Te Awanui and the Kaimai Ranges, which may be undesirable for the Marae;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Engagement with the marae to understand more fully the potential landscape effects of the Stella Passage development on the local cultural landscape from a Mātauranga Māori perspective.</i>
Marine Ecology – Steve White	<p>Mr White agrees with the Applicant's conclusions in the marine ecological values assessment, which identifies that the ecological values within the Stella Passage and southern Te Awanui areas are assessed as being 'high'. Further, Mr White agrees with the conclusions that the potential effects will be transitory or temporary with demonstrable recovery of biological communities and populations within relatively short timeframes following completion of the development works. The levels of effect are considered to be low to very low even without mitigation actions. Residual effects following mitigation are all considered to be nil.</p> <p>Mr White acknowledges that the Applicant proposes that the activities be managed to avoid effect through the development of controls and monitoring. He agrees that this is an appropriate approach and that avoiding effects through an adaptive management methodology is achievable through the imposition of conditions of consent as proposed by the Applicant. Further, the proposed monitoring program is appropriate and protective of ecological values overall.</p> <p>Mr White identifies that additional details regarding the practicality of the monitoring approach would be beneficial to the decision makers. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the cleaning and maintenance protocols for the turbidity monitoring instruments,</i> • <i>calibration intervals,</i> • <i>projected failure rates for network and individual elements with contingency provisions to provide monitoring security,</i> • <i>information regarding the data processing required to filter anomalous data points, data smoothing protocols and practical reporting limitation and timeframes around the output of the network of monitoring instruments.</i>
Marine Mammal – Simon Childerhouse	<p>Mr Childerhouse considers that the Assessment of Effects document is comprehensive and covers all of the relevant issues for this scale of development. Further, he notes that the methods used are appropriate to the issues being addressed and the acoustic monitoring work represents international best practice. In general, the risk assessment pre- and post-mitigation appear reasonable and consistent with the data available. However, Mr Childerhouse does identify one exception to this. He is of the opinion that the application of a single 500 metre shutdown zone still allows for potential 'Temporary</p>

	<p>Threshold Shift' and/or 'Permanent Threshold Shift' injuries for some species from some operations.</p> <p>Mr Childerhouse notes that there are very few references to marine mammals within the dredging conditions, which is not unexpected given the anticipated negligible risk posed by the operation. However, he has identified some statements made in the Assessment of Effects and Marine Mammal Management Plan which would be beneficial to carry forward into the draft conditions, to provide some linkage between them and to ensure they are picked up during dredging operations.</p> <p>Mr Childerhouse's review identified two recommendations for further information and a number of amendments to the conditions, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Review basis for 500 m shutdown zone noting that implementing the zone at 500 m will still allow for TTS and/PTS for some species during some activities and during times when two piling rigs may be operating. Consider different shutdown zone for when two piling rigs are operating simultaneously [Paragraphs 6-7, 9].</i> <i>2. There is no mitigation proposed for potential behavioural effects although the AOE notes that there are likely to be low and/or moderate level behavioural effects for some species [Paragraph 8].</i> <p>Proposed amendments to the conditions have been provided to the Applicant.</p> <p>Following the initial review by Mr Childerhouse, the Applicant has proposed a number of amendments to the proposed conditions of consent. Mr Childerhouse has reviewed these amendments and is generally satisfied that they address the matters raised in his initial review. In particular, it is noted that the Applicant has proposed amendments to the shutdown zone associated with the piling operations upon the identification of a marine mammal. Mr Childerhouse is satisfied that the proposed changes appropriately address potential effects on animals.</p>
Air Quality – Rob Murray Air Modelling – Jennifer Barclay	<p>Mr Murray has reviewed the Air Quality Assessment and concluded that it generally follows accepted best industry practice. Mr Murray notes that resource consent is not required for the discharge of contaminants to air given the discharges are from ships in the harbour and is therefore governed by the Resource Management (Marine Pollution) Regulations 1998.</p> <p>Mr Murray has identified that minor contaminants, including Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC),</p>

have not been considered but are known to be discharged when fuel oil is combusted and as such is of the opinion that it would be beneficial for some commentary around this and why they have not been considered further in the assessment. Additionally, it is documented by the Applicant that under Annex 6 of MARPOL the requirement to use fuel with a sulphur content of no more than 0.5% w/w (introduced in 2020) has contributed to the reduction of SO₂ levels in the Mount Maunganui Airshed. However, a specific assessment of alternatives and BPO has not been carried out. Although this may not be necessary in this instance where a resource consent is not required, for completeness some discussion around alternatives and BPO would be useful.

In summary, Mr Murray has identified the following areas where further information would assist in the assessment of potential air quality effects:

- Confirmation of any change in activities at the Cement Tanker/Bulk Liquids berth
- Confirmation of any change at the minor structures area that will materially change the discharges to air from the current operations
- Confirm that the Mount Maunganui wharf extension will only allow for one additional ship to be berthed
- Provide some commentary around the discharge of other minor contaminants (e.g. PAHs and VOCs)
- Provide details of the source of the emission rates used for the ships
- Provide an assessed of 10-minute average SO₂ concentrations against the WHO 10-minute guideline of 500µg/m³
- Provide an assessment which calculates a mass emission (kg/year) from the ships at the proposed berths. Results can be compared against data from the Mount Maunganui Airshed Emission Inventory 2022
- Review/provide the calculations used for the Air Quality Impact Descriptors
- Provide some assessment of BPO

It is noted that specific consideration of the potential air quality effects on Whareroa Marae have been assessed, given the presence of the already identified contaminated Mount Maunganui Air Shed. Ms Barclay has reviewed the air modelling assessment undertaken by the Applicant.

Ms Barclay identifies a number of minor matters in relation to the modelling methodology and data that require further explanation. Ultimately, however, she is in agreement with the Applicant's assessment, that the Proposal will result in an increase in the discharge

	<p>of contaminants to air. However, in her opinion, it is unlikely that this increase will have an adverse effect on the residences at Taiaho Place, being the closest residential properties.</p>
<p>Hydro-dynamic – Richard Reinen-Hamill</p>	<p>Information in the application documentation is predominantly the same as what was used for the Direct Referral application review. Consequently, the information was not reviewed as part of the Fast Track process. The conclusions of the Direct Referral peer review report are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Water elevation changes are likely to be negligible both in terms of elevation and timing, and any resulting change would likely have no perceptible effect on coastal processes operating within the harbour.</i> • <i>Changes in flow are limited to the deepened channel in the Stella Passage with no significant changes beyond the extent of the channel. There are minor changes in flow direction at the transition to the new dredged channel. This means that there are very slight changes from the existing baseline conditions but likely no perceptible impacts on hydrodynamics beyond the immediate work area. Local hydrodynamic changes are unlikely to result in consequent adverse impacts elsewhere.</i> • <i>The hydrodynamic changes resulting from the proposed channel design are small in relation to the natural dynamics currently operating in the area, so will likely have negligible impacts on structures flanking the channel.</i> • <i>There are localised changes in sediment transport resulting from the proposed development within the project area with likely negligible impacts outside the project area.</i>
<p>Engineering – Ana Serrano</p>	<p>No significant changes to wharf design or construction methodology are proposed by the Fast Track application, and as such, no additional technical review (beyond what was undertaken for the resource consent application) are considered necessary. A set of conditions have been proposed by Ms Serrano that address the construction activities and certification of the design works. These conditions have been included in the set proposed by the Applicant.</p>
<p>Planning – David Greaves</p>	<p>The AEE identifies the regional planning document RMA triggers applicable to the Proposal in section 5.1.3.1. It is considered that this information is an accurate reflection of the RMA regulatory requirements within Councils jurisdiction. The Proposal is located within the Port Zone and is consistent with the future development plans identified in Schedule 9 of the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. The Port is identified as being Regionally Significant Infrastructure in the Regional Policy Statement.</p> <p>Draft conditions of consent for the structures and dredging activities have been proposed. Council's team of experts have reviewed the</p>

	<p>conditions and are generally satisfied that they address the potential effects on the environment.</p> <p>The draft application notes that consultation with tangata whenua parties is ongoing and that the outcome of that consultation will inform the application, mitigation package and be reflected in the draft proposed consent conditions. Given the framework of the relevant regional planning documents, it is considered that this aspect of the assessment is critical to determining the application.</p> <p>The Application documents and proposed conditions seek the certification of a number of management plans and design elements of the Proposal. The Applicant has identified its preference for the relevant management plans to be certified as part of the processing of the application, rather than after the substantive decision is made through a process set out in the conditions. BOPRC agree with this philosophy, and consider that it is important that the application is supported by as much technical information and operational methodology as appropriate to enable the decision makers to make an informed decision. It is noted however that in some instances pre-approval is not appropriate as design work, equipment requirements or the results of further investigations are not available. In these instances, it is considered that the imposition of conditions that provide clear objectives and criteria for the management plan and a process for certification is essential. The proposed conditions generally provide for this mechanism.</p>
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Hon James Meager

Minister for the South Island
Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Minister for Youth
Associate Minister of Transport



- 4 NOV 2025

JMITC-16

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure

By email: infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz

Dear Minister Bishop,

Thank you for your invitation to comment on the referral application for the Stella Passage Development project [FTAA-2509-1101] under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. You have invited me to comment in my capacity as Associate Minister of Transport.

This application is for the expansion of the Sulphur Point and Mt Maunganui wharves, dredging of the Stella Passage within Te Awanui/Tauranga Harbour, and the installation of four new cranes on the Sulphur point wharves.

This project was initially included in Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 due to its regional and national significance. As a referral application, it remains a nationally and regionally significant transport infrastructure project which will lead to economic growth across regions, directly and indirectly.

My view is that this application aligns with the Government's priorities. I would like to take this opportunity to note my support for the Stella Passage Development project to receive the substantive approvals it requires.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Meager', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon James Meager
Minister for the South Island
Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Minister for Youth
Associate Minister of Transport

From: [Infrastructure Portfolio](#)
To: [FTAreferrals](#)
Subject: RE: Invitation to comment on Fast-track referral application for the Stella Passage Development - Stage 1 project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – FTAA-2509-1101
Date: Friday, 17 October 2025 7:56:58 am
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Please see response below from Minister for the Environment.

From: Environment Portfolio <Environment.Portfolio@parliament.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 16 October 2025 5:59 PM
To: Infrastructure Portfolio <Infrastructure.Portfolio@parliament.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Invitation to comment on Fast-track referral application for the Stella Passage Development - Stage 1 project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – FTAA-2509-1101

Dear Hon Chris Bishop

Thank you for the invitation to comment on this Fast-track referral application.

The Minister for the Environment, Hon Penny Simmonds, has reviewed this application and does not wish to provide comment.

Sincerely



Office of Hon Penny Simmonds

Environment Portfolio

Minister for the Environment | Minister for Vocational Education
Associate Minister for Social Development | MP for Invercargill

Website: www.beehive.govt.nz

Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

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From: Infrastructure Portfolio <Infrastructure.Portfolio@parliament.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 6 October 2025 12:17 PM
To: Nicola Willis (MIN) <N.Willis@ministers.govt.nz>; Shane Jones (MIN) <S.Jones@ministers.govt.nz>; Todd McClay (MIN) <T.McClay@ministers.govt.nz>; Simon Watts (MIN) <S.Watts@ministers.govt.nz>; Penny Simmonds (MIN) <P.Simmonds@ministers.govt.nz>; James Meager (MIN) <J.Meager@ministers.govt.nz>
Cc: FTAreferrals <ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz>
Subject: Invitation to comment on Fast-track referral application for the Stella Passage Development - Stage 1 project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – FTAA-2509-1101

To:
Minister for Economic Growth
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister of Climate Change
Minister for the Environment
Associate Minister of Transport

Dear Ministers,

Hon Chris Bishop, the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister), has asked for me to write to you on his behalf.

The Minister has received an application from Port of Tauranga Limited for referral of the Stella Passage Development – Stage 1 project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act) to the fast-track process (application reference FTAA-2509-1101).

The purpose of the Act is to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development projects with significant regional or national benefits.

Invitation to comment on referral application

I write in accordance with section 17 of the Act to invite you to provide written comments on the referral application. I have provided summary details of the project below.

If you wish to provide written comments, these must be received by **return email** within **20 working days** of receipt of this email. The Minister is not required to consider information received outside of this time frame. Any comments submitted will contribute to the Minister's decision on whether to accept the referral application and to refer the project.

If you do not wish to provide comments, please let us know as soon as possible so we can proceed with processing the application without delay.

If the Minister decides to accept the application and to refer the project, the Applicant will need to complete any preliminary steps required under the Act and then lodge their substantive application for the approvals needed for the project. An expert panel will be appointed to decide the substantive application.

Process

The application documents are accessible through the Fast-track portal. Please note that application documents may contain commercially sensitivity information and should not be shared widely. If you haven't used the portal before, you can request access by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz. Once you are registered and have accepted the terms and conditions, you will receive a link to view the documents. Existing users will be able to see application documents via the request when logging into the portal. Should you need for your agency to provide any supplementary information, a nominated person can be provided access to the portal, access can be requested by emailing ftareferrals@mfe.govt.nz.

To submit your comments on the application, you can either provide a letter or complete the attached template for written comments and return it by replying to this email, infrastructure.portfolio@parliament.govt.nz.

Before the due date, if you have any queries about this email or need assistance with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz. Further information is available at <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/>.

Important Information

Please note that all comments received from Ministers invited to comment will be subject to the Official Information Act 1982. Comments received will be proactively released at the time the Minister for Infrastructure makes a referral decision, unless the Minister providing comments advises the Minister for Infrastructure's office they are to be withheld, at the time they are submitted.

If a Conflict of Interest is identified by the Minister providing comments at any stage of providing comments, please inform my office and the Cabinet Office immediately. The Cabinet Office will provide advice and, if appropriate, initiate a request to the Prime Minister to agree to a transfer of the project/portfolio invite to another Minister (a request to transfer a COI from one Minister to another can take 1-7 days).

Project summary

Project name	Stella Passage Development
Applicant	Port of Tauranga Limited
Location	Tauranga / Mount Maunganui
Project description	<p>The project is to extend the existing Sulphur Point and Mount Maunganui Wharves at the existing port facility in Tauranga Harbour.</p> <p>The project's key components are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deepening, by dredging, approximately 10.55 hectares of Stella Passage to a finished depth of approximately 16m below Chart Datum (CD) (approximately mean low water spring tide). This would yield a volume of dredgings of approximately 1.5 million cubic metres. This dredging will provide clearance for vessels to berth at the proposed wharf extensions• Maintenance dredging, on an as needed basis, to maintain an operational depth of 16m below CD within sitting basins and the shipping channel of Stella Passage• Reclamation of approximately 3.58 hectares of the CMA either side of Stella Passage, to facilitate the wharf extensions. Approximately 1.81 hectares is to be reclaimed on the

	<p>Sulphur Point (western) side, and approximately 1.77 hectares is to be reclaimed on the Mount Maunganui (eastern) side</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an approximately 385m long extension to the south of the existing Sulphur Point wharves in two stages, a 285m extension first and the balance later • Development of an approximately 315m long extension to the south of the existing Mount Maunganui wharves in stages • Reconfiguration of existing structures and development of new structures in the CMA, primarily wharf piles, berthing piles and jetties • Construction and use of four additional cranes atop the proposed Sulphur Point wharf extensions for port operations (shipping container handling) • If necessary, the capture and relocation of kororā/blue penguin from the footprint of the Mount Maunganui extension; and • Activities involved in, or that support and are subsidiary to, the project.
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Yours sincerely



Office of Hon Chris Bishop

Minister of Housing | Minister for Infrastructure | Minister Responsible for RMA Reform | Minister of Transport | Associate Minister of Finance | Associate Minister for Sport & Recreation | Leader of the House | MP for Hutt South

Office: 04 817 6802 | EW 6.3
Email: c.bishop@ministers.govt.nz Website: www.Beehive.govt.nz
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

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Your written comments on a project under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Project name	Stella Passage Development
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Before the due date, for assistance on how to respond or about this template or with using the portal, please email contact@fasttrack.govt.nz or phone 0800 FASTRK (0800 327 875).

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name	Department of Conservation		
*First name	Marie		
*Last name	Payne		
Postal address			
*Contact phone number	s 9(2)(a)	Alternative	
*Email	fast-track@doc.govt.nz ;		

2. Please provide your comments on this application
Comments follow overleaf.

Manager’s signoff

Jenni Fitzgerald

03 October 2025

Director-General of Conservation s17 comments

Project name	Stella Passage Development
Applicant name	Ports of Tauranga Limited
Application number	FTAA-2509-1101
Project summary details	The project is to extend the existing Sulphur Point and Mount Maunganui Wharves at the existing port facility in Tauranga Harbour. The project site does not contain public conservation land. The Department of Conservation (DOC) understands the applicant will seek a wildlife approval as part of a future substantive application if the project is referred.

1 General comment

- 1.1.1 The project includes an approval under specified Act for which DOC is the administering agency, the applicant was required to undertake pre-lodgement consultation in accordance with section 11. DOC is satisfied that the applicant has engaged with DOC on the wildlife component of this application given it was a key focus of earlier engagement (e.g. prior to the lodgement of the applicant's previous substantive application), the applicant contacted DOC on the 17 September 2025 advised of the pending lodgement of the referral application and DOC had no further comment.
- 1.1.2 Based on the information available, DOC has not identified any reason why this project should not be referred.

2 Minister's decision on referral application

- 2.1.1 FTAA sections 21 and 22 set out matters to be considered in determining whether a referral application should be accepted.
- 2.1.2 DOC notes that other agencies are better placed to comment on most matters. Comments below are targeted to sections where DOC has specific interests or information relevant to the Minister's decision.
- 2.1.3 For completeness, DOC has considered the criteria for assessing referral applications in section 22 and has not identified anything it considers the Minister should consider.
- 2.1.4 Sections 21(3), (4) and (5) set out when the Minister may/must decline a referral application. DOC has considered these criteria and comments as follows:

Section	Criteria	Comments
21(3)(b)	Does the project involve an ineligible activity	The meaning of ineligible activity is set out in s5 of the FTAA – DOC has considered ss 5(1)(f), (h), (i), (j) and (k)

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Section	Criteria	Comments
		and has not identified any aspect of the project that would meet the definition.
21(3)(c)	Is there adequate information to inform a decision	With respect to the wildlife approval identified in the application, DOC considers the information adequate in terms of a referral decision.
21(4)	Are there any other reasons not to refer the project	DOC has not identified any other reasons why the project should not be referred.
21(5)(a)	Is the project inconsistent with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Treaty settlement; • Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019; • Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011. 	DOC has not identified any inconsistency with any relevant settlement or other obligation, subject to any comments from Treaty partners under s 17(1)(d).
21(5)(b)	Would it be more appropriate to deal with the proposed approvals under another Act(s)	DOC has not identified any reason why the conservation approval referenced should not be considered under the FTAA process
21(5)(c)	Would the project have significant adverse effects on the environment	<p>In relation to the wildlife approval sought DOC considers adverse effects can likely be managed through conditions.</p> <p>In relation to the broader proposal there will be a range of environmental effects that need to be considered, other agencies may provide further comment. In terms of effects on conservation values, DOC has identified the below focuses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avifauna • Sandpile which provides habitat for threatened fauna • Marine mammals <p>These effects would likely be manageable through appropriate conditions.</p>
21(5)(d)	Does the applicant(s) have a poor compliance history under a specified Act	DOC has not identified any issues with the applicant's compliance history under the Wildlife Act.
21(5)(g)	Would a substantive application have any competing applications	DOC has not identified any competing applications for wildlife approvals in our BAU permissions system. It is noted that the substantive application lodged by Ports of Tauranga limited is currently 'on hold' which includes an application for a wildlife approval.

2.1.5 Section 22 sets out the criteria for the Minister for accepting a referral application. DOC has considered these criteria and comments as follows:

Section	Criteria	Comments
22(1)(b)(i)	Would referring the project to the fast-track process facilitate the project, including in a way that is more timely and cost-effective than under normal processes?	DOC notes that a Wildlife Act approval of this nature would typically take three-four months to process, which is not significantly longer than the FTAA process is expected to be. However, there may be benefits for the applicant in terms of consideration being combined with RMA approvals, and given the different decision-making framework under the FTAA.
22(2)(a)(ix)	Will this project address significant environmental issues?	DOC does not consider that this project will address significant environmental issues.
22(2)(a)(x)	Is the project consistent with local or regional planning document, including spatial strategies?	Relevant local or regional documents include the Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy 1997. The Wildlife approval sought as part of this application does not appear inconsistent with that strategy. In principle the broader proposal does not appear inconsistent with the CMS however analysis of this in more detail would be done as part of reviewing substantive application documents.
22(b)	Any other matters the Minister may consider as relevant?	None identified.

Jenni Fitzgerald
Fast-Track Applications Manager

Acting pursuant to delegated authority on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation.

Date: 3 November 2025

UNCLASSIFIED

Note: A copy of the Instrument of Delegation may be inspected at the Director-General's office at Conservation House Whare Kaupapa Atawhai, 18/32 Manners Street, Wellington 6011

From: [Fast-Track Info](#)
To: [ETArefferrals](#)
Subject: Fw: You have a new Request from Fast-track Application Team CRM:0139005101
Date: Monday, 13 October 2025 1:39:12 pm
Attachments: [Outlook-A black te.png](#)

MFE CYBER SECURITY WARNING

This email originated from outside our organisation. Please take extra care when clicking on any links or opening any attachments.

Kia ora team,

Please find the below comment for POTL.

Ngā mihi,

Mehwish Imam

Application Administrator

s 9(2)(a)



Fast-track is administered by the Environmental Protection Authority. The EPA's New Zealand Business Number is 9429041901977.

This email message and any attachment(s) are intended for the addressee(s) only. If you receive this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the message and any attachments.

From: Ray Dumble s 9(2)(a)
Sent: 09 October 2025 14:29
To: Fast-Track Info <info@fasttrack.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: You have a new Request from Fast-track Application Team CRM:0139005101

To FTA

Tauranga Airport Authority has worked with POTL in relation to this project for a number of years , understand any implications on Tauranga Airport operations and fully support the project being approved as applied for.

Tauranga Airport has consulted in depth with its users and regulators any operational implications can be safely mitigated through operational procedures.

Regards

Ray Dumble
CEO
Tauranga Airport Authority

From: 'FTA NoReply' via contact <contact@tgaairport.nz>

Sent: Monday, 6 October 2025 4:24 PM

To: Tauranga Airport Authority Tauranga Airport Authority <contact@tgaairport.nz>

Subject: You have a new Request from Fast-track Application Team CRM:0139005101

CAUTION: External Email.

Dear Tauranga Airport Authority Tauranga Airport Authority

The Fast Track Application team requests that you provide feedback on the Application (POTL - Stella Passage Development) regarding Tauranga Airport Authority - Invite to Comment - POTL Stella Passage.

The application and associated documents can be viewed through our portal.

Your response can also be uploaded to the portal.

The Team have requested that you provide your feedback by :03-11-2025.

Should you need any assistance during the registration or application process, please contact us at info@fasttrack.govt.nz or call 0800 327 875.

We thank you for your diligence in this matter and look forward to working with you through the application process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to contact+unsubscribe@tgaairport.nz.

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