LANDSCAPE EFFECTS REPORT
PORT OF TAURANGA STELLA PASSAGE DEVELOPMENT

Prepared For:

Port of Tauranga Limited

Brown NZ Ltd
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0. Executive Summary

0.1 Scope

This report addresses the landscape, natural character and amenity effects of the Port of Tauranga Limited's (PoTL's) proposed Stella Passage development on the landscape and natural character values of Tauranga, Mt Maunganui and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour.

The assessment process and findings are contextualised by the existing landscape and environment within and around the Port, by the state of the coastal / marine environment in and near Stella Passage and by a range of statutory instruments, from the Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA') and New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 ('NZCPS') to regional and city / district plans.

The methodology employed to assess landscape and natural character effects is consistent with *Te Tangi a te Manu* – the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects landscape assessment guidelines published in May 2022 – including the scope of the assessment process and its rating scale. In this regard, it is important to note that landscape effects are addressed in terms of three dimensions:

- Biophysical Values;
- Human Perceptual / Experiential Values; and
- Associative Values.

In adopting this approach, it is recognised that changes to biophysical attributes and values contribute to effects on any landscape's perceptual and associative values (i.e., values relating to the human perception and appreciation of both landscapes and coastal environments (including iwi and community connections with both and their sense of place)), and to effects on its natural character.

In this case, expert assessments of the project's effects on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's bathymetry, hydrodynamics, water quality, ecology and marine life (i.e., biophysical values) provide a platform for, and precursor to, the evaluation of effects on perceptual and associative values.

0.2 The Assessment of Landscape & Natural Character Effects

The assessment of effects in this report has been undertaken in accordance with *Te Tangi a te Manu* (the NZILA guidelines for Landscape Assessment, 2022) recognising that landscape and natural character values reflect the biophysical attributes of the coastal environment and landscape, human perception and appreciation of that same environment, and the various meanings – together with more specific values – that the community, iwi and other interest groups attach to it.

In undertaking this assessment, the evaluation of effects has also been shaped by:

- The existing port and its wider landscape setting – including much of Tauranga Harbour;

- The statutory context provided by relevant regional and district planning instruments, the RMA and NZCPS, and iwi management plans which address the port and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour;
- The receiving environments and audiences that are arrayed around the current Port and Stella Passage; and
- The various qualities and values associated with the Port and Stella Passage.

0.3 Landscape & Natural Character Effects

Taking these factors into account, and in particular, the already highly modified and developed state of Stella Passage and its margins, the project's natural character effects in relation to all viewpoints and receiving environments are assessed as being of a very low order.

The landscape effects raising from the project would, for the most part, also be of a very low to low order, including effects on viewshafts from local marae and other public vantage points to Mauao. These quite modest effects have been identified in relation to areas near the existing port and Stella Passage that include most of Mt Maunganui, Pilot Bay, Otūmoetai and the Tauranga CBD. The one exception to this general situation is Whareroa Marae, which would be affected to a moderate degree by the second stage of proposed development at Sulphur Point, albeit much less so by the 'Stage 1' development. However, these effects would be largely 'driven' by vessels using the expanded port, which are a Permitted Activity, and new container cranes, which are subject to RD Assessment solely in relation to flight paths to and from Tauranga Airport. The natural character effects in relation to all surrounding receiving environments would be of a very low order.

As a result, it is concluded that the Stella Passage development would be consistent with relevant statutory provisions, including those addressing sections 6(a) and (b) of the RMA, Policies 13 and 15 of the NZCPS, the Port Zone in the Bay of Plenty Coastal Environment Plan and the Tauranga City Plan.

Accordingly, the project is considered to be acceptable in terms of its landscape and natural character effects, without additional mitigation measures – beyond those already built into the project. Overall, therefore, the project is considered to be acceptable in terms of its landscape and natural character effects, without any screening or other mitigation measures.

0.4 Recommendations

The adverse effects identified, mainly in relation to the shipping and cranes that would be visible from Whareroa Marae, would exacerbate the sense of intrusion and encroachment already of concern to marae representatives. In this regard, the pohutukawas growing near Te Awanui Drive will continue to offer a degree of screening between the marae and Stage 2 development, but will not be large enough to screen all of the key elements associated with an expanded port.

Instead, a number of ecological initiatives – including the blue penguin nesting boxes proposed at Butters Landing, relocation of the existing gull and tern colony within the Port, and the ongoing

protection of Te Paritaha (and its kaimoana) – would help to minimise the full range of effects associated with port expansion, including biophysical effects, and may also be meaningful for the Marae and Ngāi Te Rangi. It is, however, recognised that these measures would not compensate for, or offset, the physical and visual 'containment' of Whareroa Marae by both industrial and port activities.

1. Introduction

The Port of Tauranga Limited ('PoTL') is seeking to expand its berthage facilities at both Mt Maunganui and Sulphur Point, and to undertake capital dredging within Stella Passage (the 'Stella Passage development' or the 'project'). This report addresses the landscape and natural character effects associated with the proposed expansion of the berthage facilities.

Currently, the Port of Tauranga ('Port') is split between the container terminal on Sulphur Point (Berths 23 – 25) and wharves at Mt Maunganui North and South that handle timber exports (Berths 7-11), fuel / petroleum offloading (Wharf 16), cruise ships and other forms of cargo handling (Berths 1-6). The container terminal is also notable for the eight container cranes that presently line the western side of Stella Passage – a channel connecting the main body of the harbour with Waipu Bay and Tauranga's CBD – while port storage facilities behind the wharves cater for containers, log piles, cold and general freight storage. The Port's custom bonded areas and secure zones directly abut Marine Park and Tauranga Marina off Keith Allen Drive at Sulphur Point, as well as Totara Street, which extends from State Highway 2 / Te Awanui Drive through to the Mt Maunganui CBD on the eastern side of Stella Passage. The southern end of the Mt Maunganui Port complex terminates near Whareroa Point, immediately north of the Tauranga Bridge Marina and the main harbour bridge that connects Tauranga with Mt Maunganui.

The proposed expansion of wharves both sides of Stella Passage would involve the construction of additional berthage south of Sulphur Point's current Berth 25, and reclamation in the area down to the current 'sand pile' at the southern edge of the container terminal. The Sulphur Point wharf expansions would also involve the installation of additional cranes on the new wharves. On the Mt Maunganui side of Stella Passage, new reclamation and dredging would be undertaken, together with the placement of mooring and breasting dolphins, to accommodate that area's use by minor vessels, such as fishing boats and ferries. A limited number of 'minor structures and berths' would also be developed at Butters Landing.

This report addresses the natural character, landscape and amenity effects associated with the project. In the process of addressing those effects, it addresses the following:

a) The key components of proposed Stages 1 and 2, including the cranes that would be key features of the expanded Sulphur Point Container Terminal and its berths;

b) Relevant statutory instruments in regional and district / city planning documents that reflect the Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA'), key provisions of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 ('NZCPS'), and other relevant strategic documents;

c) The current landscape, natural character and amenity values of the Port area, together with those of the wider coastal, industrial, residential, and recreational environments found around the Port that could be affected by the project; and

d) The landscape, natural character, and amenity effects (positive and adverse) associated with the project – both for each stage and cumulatively.

In undertaking this assessment, it is recognised that the Port's existing berths, sheds, container terminal and stacks, cranes, lighting, other structures, secure operational areas, and shipping form part of the existing environment that is functionally linked to the project area, both physically and visually. At the same time, the Port lies close to Whareroa Marae, residential areas within both Mt Maunganui and Otūmoetai, and is exposed to both Mauao and Pilot Bay. It is integrally linked to the rest of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour. Each area has different qualities and sensitivities, as well as different relationships with the Port and Stella Passage, that further contextualise the project.

This assessment has also been undertaken, having regard to relevant national, regional and district planning instruments – primarily the NZCPS, Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS), Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP) and the Tauranga City Plan. Other strategic documents taken into account in the course of this assessment include iwi management plans and a number of 'published histories' that contextualise the proposed changes to part of the harbour.

Finally, the assessment of landscape and natural character effects within this report inevitably traverses areas of related expertise – such as hydrology and coastal processes, water quality, geomorphology, and marine ecology – that go beyond the specialist skills of landscape architects. Accordingly, that assessment, and some of its findings, are reliant on the empirical assessments undertaken by experts in allied fields which are brought together under the broad umbrella of 'natural character' effects.

As a result, this report comprises the following sections:

Section 1. **Introduction**

Section 2. **A Project Overview**

Section 3. **The Project's Landscape Context**

Section 4. **Statutory Considerations**

Section 5. **Iwi Management Plans and the Published Histories of Tauranga**

Section 6. **The Effects Management Methodology**

Section 7. **Biophysical Effects**

Section 8. **Perceptual / Associative Landscape and Natural Character Effects**

Section 9. **Statutory Evaluation**

Section 10. **Conclusions & Recommendations**

2. Project Overview

The following are brief summaries of the developments associated with both stages of the Stella Passage Project:

Stage 1: would see extension of the existing Sulphur Point Container Terminal berths some 285m south of the current terminal berths, accommodating an extra container ship berth and up to two new container cranes, together with associated reclamation and dredging. The new cranes, like those already operating at Sulphur Point, would have A-frame gantries and a maximum height of 110m (when in their 'resting' position). In addition, automated stacking cranes – up to 35m high – would operate within the container terminal, between and straddling its stacked containers.

Stage 2: would result in extension of the Sulphur Point Container Terminal berths by another 100m, to a termination point 385m south of the current container berths. Again, two more cranes could be employed in this area, but their height would be limited to a maximum height of 78m. This would require the use of articulated boom cranes that have lower operating and resting positions than A-frame cranes (see overleaf), while a total of 12 to 13 container cranes could then be employed at Sulphur Point overall – four more than in the past.

The following plans (Figures 2 and 3) help to further explain the project.

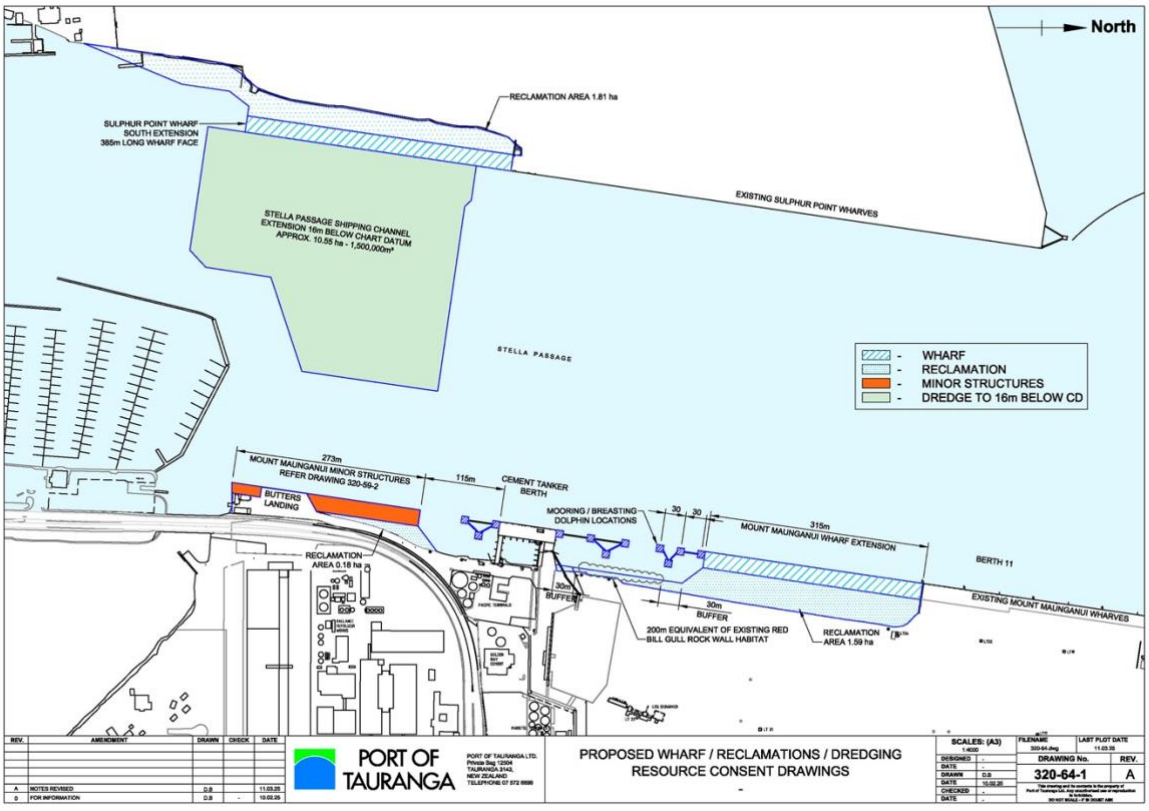

Figure 2. Project overview

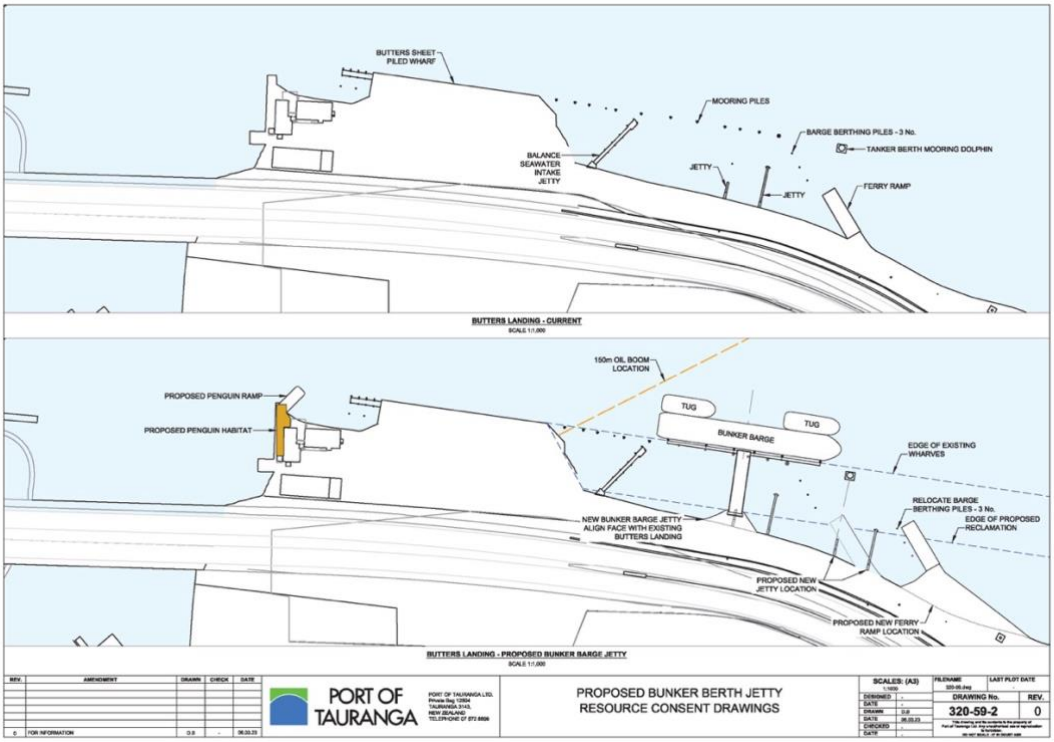

Figure 3. Southern Mt Maunganui Wharf and Butters Landing project detail

While the extent of container stacks within the container terminal will barely change, their configuration and alignment – together with that of the Port's light standards – will continue to evolve with the movement towards automated stacking systems. Yet, this will not alter the fundamental nature of the container port. On the other hand, up to two additional container ships could be berthed down the western side of Stella Passage.

Figure 4. An articulated boom crane with its boom 'resting' (above) and operating (below)

Figure 5. An automated stacking crane in operation

In addition, down the Mt Maunganui side of Stella Passage, a number of 'minor structures and minor vessel berths' would be developed south of the current fuel jetty, around the Butters Landing ferry ramp and PoTL's storage area close to Whareroa Bridge, including:

- Installation of new mooring dolphins outside the existing cement tanker berth;
- Relocation of the existing ferry ramp northwards;
- Relocation of an existing jetty northwards and construction of a third jetty;
- Development of a barge jetty between Butters Landing and the ferry ramp;
- Development of 200m of gull habitat south of the wharf extension; and
- Development of a penguin ramp and habitat at the southern end of Butters Landing.

These structures and berths will not extend southwards beyond the edge of the existing port reclamation next to Whareroa Bridge. Currently, this part of the Port is used for the storage of equipment and structures (e.g. buoys), offices, and the berthing of some very small-scale vessels. In the future a variety of vessels would use the berths within this area, including working boats, bunker barges and ferries.

It is expected that the completion of the project would give rise to an additional 16 ship visits to Sulphur Point per month, and eight additional vessel movements to and from the Mt Maunganui berths – on top of a current base of 162 movements per month. This equates to approximately one extra ship / vessel movement per day.

Key points to emerge from all of the above are as follows:

1. The wharf expansions would be significant physically: they would result in port developments and activities dominating both sides of Stella Passage, although they would be co-located within parts of Stella Passage that are already substantially shaped, and very heavily influenced, by existing port activities and structures.

2. Consequently, even though the combination of proposed port structures and activities – including additional shipping – within Stella Passage would expand the Port's effective 'sphere of influence', such effects would be more 'additive', rather than new.

3. Similarly, the proposed dredging associated with these developments would occur within and next to parts of Stella Passage that are either subject to regular dredging currently or that have consent for additional dredging. Consequently, the proposed dredging, both capital and maintenance, would be an additional activity, rather than a new one.

Finally, it is also important to acknowledge that PoTL had originally proposed to extend the Mt Maunganui wharves and associated vessel berths southward, down to the Butters Landing area, near Whareroa Bridge. That original proposal has been replaced by the proposed development of the 'minor structures and minor vessel berths' in order to minimise the impacts of the Port expansion on Whareroa Marae and the Te Awanui Drive area more generally.

3. Landscape Context

The following Attachments accompany this section, comprising photos of the landscapes and seascapes that encompass the proposed expansion areas within the Port of Tauranga and either side of Stella Passage:

Attachment 1:	Viewpoint Map
Attachments 2 & 3:	Stella Passage and the Maunganui Roads
Attachments 4 & 5:	The Port's Immediate Hinterland Around Totara Street
Attachments 6 & 7:	Views from Mt Maunganui's residential area towards the Port
Attachment 8:	Views from Whareroa Marae towards Stella Passage and the Port
Attachment 9:	Looking towards the Port and Sulphur Point from Pilot Bay
Attachment 10:	View from Mauao towards the Port
Attachments 11 & 12:	Views from the Tauranga Harbour Marina and its beach towards Stella Passage and the Sulphur Point Container Terminal
Attachment 12:	Looking down Stella Passage from the Tauranga Harbour Bridge
Attachment 13:	The Sulphur Point Container Terminal and its Immediate Surrounds
Attachments 14 & 15	Views to the Sulphur Point Container Terminal from Marine Park and the Tauranga Marina
Attachments 15 & 16:	Views from Otūmoetai Beach and Pilllans Avenue towards Sulphur Point and the container terminal
Attachment 17:	Views from the Mission Cemetery and Dive Crescent towards the Port

3.1 General Description

The following plans and descriptions address the proposed areas of port development and related dredging. They are designed to provide a general appreciation of these areas, while also highlighting factors / matters that are relevant to this assessment in terms of key features and values, and other findings that are relevant to the effects associated with PoTL's consent application.

Figure 7: Location Plan - the Port, Stella Passage, 'Maunganui Roads', Mauao and surrounding locations

Figure 8: Aerial View of the Sulphur Point Container Terminal & Berths and the log port

Stella Passage, Maunganui Roads and Mauao Harbour Entrance

Looking from as far away as Mauao, but also across Tauranga Harbour from the west, views of the Port reveal a robust maritime landscape that is anchored by Sulphur Point and its visually distinctive container cranes, the Port's sheds and container stacks, the Mt Maunganui log berths and shipping, cruise ships, light standards and – lower down – the sea channel that links the Port area. Starting to the north at Mauao, before passing Matakana Island, Pilot Bay, and both sides of the Port, before terminating at the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, this key navigation channel starts off in a relatively natural state, marked by navigation aids next to the channel and on Matakana Island, before becoming more 'formalised' between Te Paritaha (bank) and the Mt Maunganui Berths, then quite emphatically structured within the engineered bounds of Stella Passage.

This transition is matched by changes to its immediate setting, starting with the rising volcanic mantle of Mauao largely covered in a mixture of coastal forest and shrubland, while Matakana Island on the opposite side of the harbour entrance comprises a dune barrier island that is mostly covered in production pine forest. Both are exposed to the swells and surf of the Pacific Ocean's open seas, but whereas Mauao is ringed by volcanic tephra and reefs, the elongated spit form of Matakana Island is fronted by dunes and a sand beachfront that culminate in Panepane Point at the southern edge of the harbour 'gateway'.

First approaching, then moving past the head of Sulphur Point, the Mt Maunganui side of the Port is increasingly demarcated by the cruise ship, general cargo and log port berths that line that side of the harbour – together with berthed vessels – while the Port's cargo and frozen goods sheds, then log stacks, dominate the area behind this straight 'edge'. Opposite, the Sulphur Point container terminal berths also emerge, often highlighted by the presence of large container ships and the even taller cranes that serve them. Backed by row upon row of container stacks across the terminal, the cranes' activity accentuates their presence, although they are at least as prominent when stationary in their upright, 'resting' position. Within the very rectilinear basin of Stella Passage, other elements are also readily apparent, including:

- The shipping, roading, lights, buildings and sand pile on, and at the edge of, the current Sulphur Point port area – around Berths 23-25;
- The log freighters, log stacks, hard standing, lights and sheds of Berths 7-11;
- The more intermittent presence of other freight ships, cruise liners, hard standing, sheds and lighting of Berths 1-6;
- The petroleum / fuel jetty, shipping and buildings around Berth 16;
- The tank farm behind the fuel jetty;
- Butters Landing, at the southern end of the Maunganui Berths, with its Matakana Island ferry, ramp and port servicing / storage area;
- The outer pontoons / breakwaters and piling of the Tauranga Bridge Marina, together with the lines of piers and berthed vessels inside it;
- A scattering of yachts and launches moored mainly between the marina and the Tauranga

Harbour Bridge;

- Both that bridge and the much lower, Whareroa Bridge next to the Tauranga Harbour Marina and the Whareroa Boat Ramp; and
- Industrial premises off Reid Place and Cross Road near the southern end of the Sulphur Point Container Terminal.

Largely contained by the Tauranga Harbour Bridge and Whareroa Bridge, this amalgam of buildings, structures, vessels and activities is symptomatic of a 'hard edged', robust, maritime environment. Together with the container terminal and industrial premises arrayed behind PoTL's main port areas and the Tauranga Harbour Marina , they contribute to the feeling of a large node of development and uses that is at the highly modified end of landscape and natural character spectrums. This is accentuated by the daily comings and goings of container ships, log ships and fuel carriers, the more irregular arrival and departure of cruise liners, and the use of the Port and Stella Passage by a wide range of other vessels. These activities also impact on the public perception of the water area between Sulphur Point and Mt Maunganui that is subject to current port activities and maintenance dredging. As a result, both Stella Passage and its areas of adjacent port activity are quite different from the urban 'hinterland' immediately outside this 'harbour reach'.

The Mt Maunganui Wharves

The Mt Maunganui berths are backed by a mixture of Port offices, general cargo and cool store buildings, silos, railway lines, an extensive array of log stacks, and a broad swathe of hard standing that is used by trucks, log handlers, mobile cranes, and other equipment. Light standards also criss-cross the Port. Fuel lines and storage tanks also traverse the fuel jetty at Berth 16, while Butters Landing combines a ferry ramp with storage areas for equipment and port structures, a small-boat berth, and offices. Notwithstanding these port operations and the very hard-edged, maritime nature of this environment, a colony of black and red billed gulls, together with some terns, also resides within the Port compound, on the rock armouring found between its southern-most log ship berth and the fuel jetty.

This line of port operations west of Totara Street then merges with most of Tauranga's medium and heavy industrial premises across that road corridor – extending from Hewletts Road and Tasman Quay (in the south) to Rata Street (in the north. This area also extends south of Hewletts Road to embrace the sizeable Ballance Agri-nutrients plant and additional fuel storage facilities. In effect, it comprises Tauranga City's medium to heavy industrial heartland, extending eastwards to meet Maunganui Road.

However, the Bay Oval sports arena, Blake Park, hockey turfs, netball courts and other sporting facilities are also located near the northern end of this industrial area and on the Port's periphery, between Matai Street and the port railway line. Further north, more office and retail-focused premises are found between Totara Street and Tawa Street, while several blocks of residential development are located between Tawa Street and Maunganui Road. These industrial and commercial activities extend across Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's former dune and coastal terrace hinterland, establishing a broad buffer zone between the Port, and residential areas closer to Mt Maunganui Beach and the Mt Maunganui CBD and Central Parade shopping centre.

Sulphur Point

The narrow peninsula form of Sulphur Point, immediately west of Stella Passage, was created in 1969 with the decision to establish a container port at Tauranga / Mt Maunganui. As a result, between 1970 and 1989, the *MV Teremoana* dredged 5.5 million cubic metres from the Maunganui Roads and Stella Passage, which was all pumped ashore via pipelines to form Sulphur Point. Figure 7 shows the extent of this modification in 1969, with the resulting peninsula now covering some 95ha. It bears little relation to the beachfront and spit extant prior to those developments. Most of the artificial landform is now covered by PoTL's container terminal, while an array of maritime industries operate between the terminal and Te Awanui Drive. Moana Pacific Fisheries are also located on Cross Street, almost directly abutting the southern end of the container terminal.

Figure 9: Construction of Sulphur Point reclamation in 1969.

West of this area, a Holcim Concrete plant, then part of the container terminal and its railway corridor are located next to the Dive Crescent fly-over. A bulk retail centre and the Chapel Street wastewater treatment plant then reach through to near the edge of the Waikareao Estuary – across Chapel Street. Progressing northwards, Cross Street merging with Keith Allen Drive separates the main body of the container terminal from a University of Waikato coastal marine station; then the pohutukawas, Norfolk Island pines and open space of Marine Park; and – at the head of the peninsula – the Tauranga Marina. The Tauranga Fish and Dive Club and Sulphur Point Boat Ramp sit within the reserve, while a boat sales office and yard are sited at the southern end of the marina car park. The Tauranga Yacht and Power Boat Club sits at the head of Sulphur Point, next to a smaller boat ramp and a public beach, whereas the

actual marina projects out westwards into the mouth of the Waikareao Estuary.

Otūmoetai

Closely linked to Sulphur Point, Otūmoetai is a suburb of bungalows dating back to the 1960s and '70s, although more recent renovation and redevelopment is conspicuous down the edge of Otūmoetai Beach – enjoying panoramic views of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, Mauao, Matakana Island and the distal end of Sulphur Point. Looking from this 'edge', the northern end of Sulphur Point is clearly visible, together with the Tauranga Marina – which screens out a significant proportion of the Maunganui Roads from near the Waikareao Estuary. Even so, most views out across Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour remain expansive, with the container cranes and Mauao affording a sense of visual counterpoint between two quite different types of 'feature'. Moving away from the estuary mouth (Attachment 46), more of the Maunganui Roads emerge beyond the outer breakwater and vessels of the intervening marina.

Yet, few of these features are apparent in views from most of the suburb, with intervening housing, fencing, walling and gardens limiting views from most properties spread across a shallow harbour terrace and gently rising ridges behind it. Just those living next to Otūmoetai Beach and others occupying some of its more elevated ridges enjoy clearer views of both the harbour and Sulphur Point. Only a few, more elevated, parts of Otūmoetai – such as at the end of Pillans Road – reveal more of the Waikareao Estuary, together with the industrial development and containers spread across Sulphur Point. But very little of the main harbour, Mauao, or the Maunganui Roads and harbour entrance is visible.

3.2 Outstanding Natural Features / Landscapes and Areas of Significant Cultural Value

The contrasting values associated with Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and its margins – both near the Port and further afield – are clearly reflected in the delineation of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes (**ONFLs**), and Areas of Significant Cultural Value (**ASCV**) – in Schedules 3 and 6 and Maps 09a, 09b, 11a, 11b and 12 of the RCEP (as shown overleaf and on **Attachments 18** and **19**):

Figure 10: Regional Coastal Environment Plan - Map 09a

Figure 11: Regional Coastal Environment Plan - Map 11a

Figure 12: Regional Coastal Environment Plan - Map 09a

Figure 13: Regional Coastal Environment Plan - Map 11b

As these plans show, ONFL3 (Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour) and ASCV-4A (Te Paritaha) specifically exclude Stella Passage and the Maunganui Roads, with the ONFL boundary skirting both. This exclusion also includes both marinas that flank the Port, the outer Waikareao Estuary Channel (north of the railway bridge), and those parts of Waipu Bay that form the southern navigation channel between Stella Passage and Tauranga's CBD. The following descriptions of ONFL3 and ASCV-4A are drawn from

Schedules 3 and **6**.

Schedule 3: Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes
ONFL 3 – Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour:

Te Awanui Tauranga Harbour, Waimapu Estuary & Welcome Bay – ONFL 3	Map Sheets 2a, 3a, 4a, 6a, 7a, 8a, 9a, 10a, 11a, 12a, 13a, 14a

Description:

Tauranga Harbour is a shallow tidal estuary of 224 km2. At low tide, 93% of the seabed is exposed. The harbour and its estuarine margins comprise numerous bays, estuaries, wetland and saltmarsh. The key attributes which drive the requirement for classification as ONFL, and require protection, relate to the high natural science values associated with the margins and habitats; the high transient values associated with the tidal influences; and the high aesthetic and natural character values of the vegetation and harbour patterns.

Current uses:

Bridges, national grid infrastructure, wharves, moorings, residential development, boardwalks, stormwater and sewer infrastructure, boat ramps, reclamations, recreational activities such as water skiing, fishing, boating, channel markers, navigational signs.

Evaluation		**Rating**
Natural Science Factors	Representativeness: The spatial relationship the harbour has with the land, providing estuaries, bays and beaches, is of significant value in representing the character of the landscape. This value is further enhanced by the scale of the water body, its dynamic patterns, and areas of native estuarine vegetation – all of which are highly representative of the harbour.	H
	Research and education: The proximity of the harbour to Tauranga, and the accessibility to large parts of the harbour edge, allows for educational and research opportunities both in the marine and terrestrial environments. Rarity: The natural harbour margins and waters are not a rare landscape feature at a regional level.	M-H
Aesthetic Values	Coherence: The extent of the harbour waters, its associated sand and shell banks and patterns result in a coherent landscape.	L
	Vividness: The value associated with the vividness of Tauranga Harbour is not resultant from any particular section or margin (though it is recognised some margins may be more vivid than others), rather it is the extensive relationship of the complete harbour waters, which define the landform, the extent of the harbour and its coastal patterns, that is highly recognisable and memorable within the region.	H
	Naturalness: Tauranga Harbour below the MHWS has low modification and includes extensive areas of sea grass and saltmarsh around the margins of the mainland and island, as well as mangroves, and vegetation patterns which transition to freshwater wetlands at river mouths. The harbour also features shell and sand banks used by indigenous birds. Consequently the landscape has a high diversity of habitats and vegetation types that combined result in a naturalistic landscape.	
	Intactness: Inlets and water ingress to the harbour has been modified to concentrate flows of water around built elements; however other parts, such as the northern and southern estuaries, remain largely unmodified. It is noted that the removal of mangroves (around settled areas) has damaged the sub tidal sea floor and produced unnatural lines in the vegetation, this combined with the modifications associated with the southern extent of the harbour (reclamation and harbour margin development), detract from the level of intactness. However, the natural processes which are evident in this landscape (i.e. the changing water levels), result in an overall aesthetically cohesive landscape, with largely intact coastal processes.	M-H
Expressiveness (Legibility)	The harbour margin features an indented coastline, with a series of headlands, estuaries and embayments and some isolated areas of remnant coastal vegetation. These features, together with the natural processes of the harbour waters, are highly valued for expressing the natural processes which influence, and change this landscape.	H
Transient values	The tidal flow is a significant component of the transient values and results in a constantly changing landscape, which is particularly prevalent around the harbour margins and northern entrance. Also of value is the presence of avifauna which further contribute seasonal changes to the landscape.	M-H
Shared and recognised values	Nationally recognised and valued.	H
Māori values	Ancient pa, mahinga kai, wāhi tapu, kāinga, taunga ika. Te Awanui is a significant area of traditional history and identify for the three Tauranga Moana Iwi – Ngai Te Rangi, Ngati Ranginui and Ngati Pūkenga. Waitaha of Arawa also has strong ancestral connections to Te Awanui. Te Awanui includes many cultural heritage sites, many of which are recorded in Iwi and Hapū Management Plans and other historical documents and files (including Treaty Settlement documents). The Coastal Marine Area is identified as an area of Significant Cultural Value (ASCV 4) in Schedule 6.	M-H
Historical associations	Landscape contains a very high concentration of recorded archaeological sites that are associated with Māori occupation and use of the harbour resources.	

Schedule 6: Areas of Significant Cultural Value

One Area of Significant Cultural Value (Schedule 6) is identified in close proximity to the existing port and Stella Passage and outside of any effects, being:

Te Paritaha O Te Awanui:

SITE NAME: TE PARITAHA O TE AWANUI
SITE NUMBER: ASCV-4A MAP SHEETS: 11b

Te Paritaha o Te Awanui is the original name for the large sand bank located offshore from Waikorere (Pilot Bay) Panepane (Matakana Island), Te Papa (Sulphur Point), and Otūmoetai. Te Paritaha literally means "to flow over" and Te Awanui is the traditional name for the eastern portion of the Tauranga harbour.

Te Paritaha o Te Awanui is the largest pipi bed within Te Awanui (Tauranga Harbour), and is renowned for its abundant supply of pipi. The bed has been a customary harvesting ground for many generations and is still an important harvesting area today for the whanau and hapū of Ngāti Ranginui, Ngai Te Rangi and Ngāti Pūkenga. Te Paritaha is one of the few remaining sustainable shellfish beds within the harbour.

Te Paritaha is a taonga and a key source of sustenance for whānau, hapū and iwi of Tauranga Moana. Tauranga Moana whānau, hapū and iwi have a duty to protect the sustaining qualities of Paritaha. It is essential to protect the mauri of Paritaha to ensure that intertribal cultural practices of old will continue into the future.

The traditional practice of "ta koha" or reciprocity is the process of providing kaimoana and/or local resources to visitors or to traditional Maori both locally and inter regional events. The significance of these processes should not be under estimated. They are critical to ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of inter-tribal relationships and the physical and spiritual wellbeing of Maori. The practice invokes a deep sense of obligation underpinned by the principles of manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga and mana.

Te Paritaha is said to be the source of mauri for all other pipi beds in Te Awanui. The role of whānau hapū and iwi as kaitiaki is to protect the mauri of Paritaha. Mauri in this regard refers to the integrity, form, functioning (including natural biological and ecological processes), resilience, physical and spiritual characteristics & qualities, mana-atua, mana-tangata, tapu life principle, tikanga and kawa practices, connectedness & interdependency and accessibility. This involves ensuring that the full physical extent of the integrity of Paritaha is acknowledged. In this way, the kaimoana that Paritaha supports is also protected.

3.3 The Natural Character Values of the Coastal Environment

The mapping of ONFLs and ASCVs within Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour is, in turn, mirrored by that in the operative RPS addressing natural character values. This mapping – encapsulated in RPS Map 20 (below) – shows Stella Passage, the Maunganui Roads and the Port's coastal margins free of any overlays indicating areas of outstanding or high natural character – much like other port environs around NZ.

This contrasts with most of the outer harbour, which is otherwise identified as having a very high level of natural character, while Mauao and its rocky margins together with Matakana Island's ocean beach are attributed a high level of natural character, and most of the islands off Mt Maunganui are identified

as having an outstanding degree of natural character. Waihi Bay, 'inside' Whareroa Bridge and the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, is also attributed a high level of natural character – in conjunction with the Waikareao Estuary and Rangataua Bay.

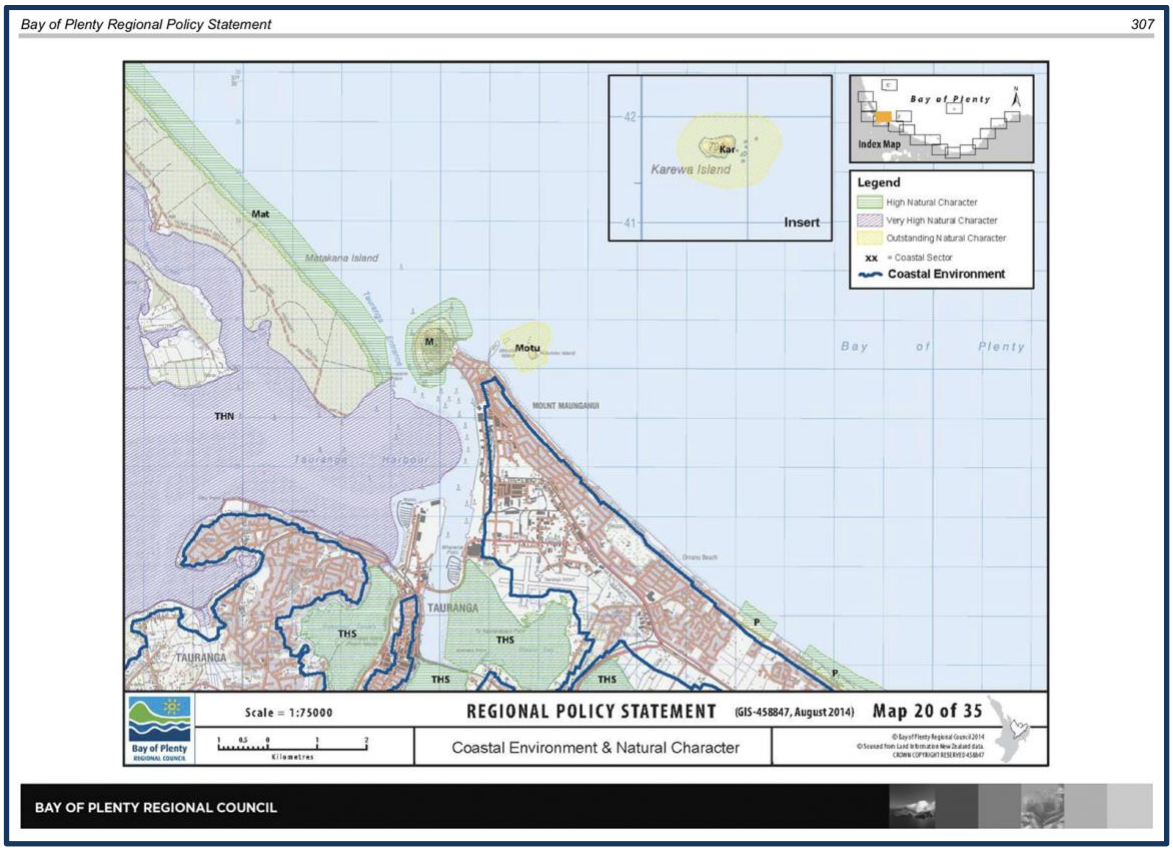

Figure 14: Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement – Map 20

4. Statutory Considerations

This section summarises the key provisions of the relevant planning instruments, which comprise:

- New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (**NZCPS**);
- Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement 2014 (**RPS**);
- Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan 2019 (**RCEP**); and
- Tauranga City Plan 2024 (**TCP**).

4.1 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010

The NZ Coastal Policy Statement has a critical role to play in interpreting 'preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment' under section 6(a) of the Resource Management Act, none more so than Objectives 2 and 6:

> ***Objective 2***
>
> *To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect natural features and landscape values through:*
>
> - *recognising the characteristics and qualities that contribute to natural character, natural features and landscape values and their location and distribution;*
> - *identifying those areas where various forms of subdivision, use, and development would be inappropriate and protecting them from such activities; and*
> - *encouraging restoration of the coastal environment.*
>
> ***Objective 6***
>
> *To enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety, through subdivision, use, and development, recognising that:*
>
> - *the protection of the values of the coastal environment does not preclude use and development in appropriate places and forms, and within appropriate limits;*
> - *some uses and developments which depend upon the use of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment are important to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities;*
> - *functionally some uses and developments can only be located on the coast or in the coastal marine area; ……*
> - *the protection of habitats of living marine resources contributes to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities; …….*
> - *historic heritage in the coastal environment is extensive but not fully known, and vulnerable to loss or damage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.*

These objectives reflect the need to balance the protection of natural character values with the recognition that some important activities and developments are functionally limited to NZ's coastlines, e.g. ports. They are supported by Policies 13 and 15, which focus on implementation of the RMA requirements to preserve natural character values and to protect outstanding natural features and landscapes:

Policy 13 Preservation of Natural Character

(1) To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and to protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:

(a) avoid adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal environment with outstanding natural character; and

(b) avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment; including by: ….

(2) Recognise that natural character is not the same as natural features and landscapes or amenity values and may include matters such as:

(a) natural elements, processes and patterns;

(b) biophysical, ecological, geological and geomorphological aspects;

(c) natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks;

(d) the natural movement of water and sediment;

(e) the natural darkness of the night sky;

(f) places or areas that are wild or scenic;

(g) a range of natural character from pristine to modified; and

(h) experiential attributes, including the sounds and smell of the sea; and their context or setting.

Policy 15 Natural Features and Natural Landscapes

To protect the natural features and natural landscapes (including seascapes) of the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:

(a) avoid adverse effects of activities on outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes in the coastal environment; and

(b) avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy, or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on other natural features and natural landscapes in the coastal environment; including by ……..

In relation to Policy 13, sub-policy (1)(b) is particularly relevant to the PoTL's development proposal, as even though Stella Passage is not part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour identified as having outstanding natural character, it still needs to be addressed as an 'all other areas of the coastal environment'. As such, it is essential to avoid 'significant adverse effects' on the coastal environment and to 'avoid, remedy or mitigate' other adverse effects on it, including the matters outlined under sub-policy (2).

Similarly, while Stella Passage and the 'Maunganui Roads' navigation corridor are not part of any ONFL in terms of Policy 15, they are adjacent to parts of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour that are – including Waipu Bay and most of the outer harbour. Furthermore, sub-policy (b) requires the avoidance of 'significant adverse effects' on other natural features and landscapes in the coastal environment, and the avoidance, remediation or mitigation of 'other adverse effects' associated with coastal activities.

4.2 Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement

Consistent with sections 6(a) and (b) of the RMA and Policy 13 (Preservation of Natural Character) of the NZCPS, Policies CE2B, CE3A and CE8B of the RPS lay a broad foundation for the protection of, and management of effects on, the natural character of the Region's coastal environments:

CE 2B: Managing adverse effects on natural character within the coastal environment

Preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development by including provisions in regional and district plans, and when making decisions on resource consents to:

(a) Avoid adverse effects of activities on the attributes that comprise natural character in areas of the coastal environment with outstanding natural character as identified in the maps and tables in Appendix I and J;

(a) Avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on the attributes comprising the natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment, recognising that areas identified in maps in Appendix I as having high or very high natural character can be especially sensitive to the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development; and

(a) Recognise that open coastal water in the region is of at least high natural character.

CE 3A: Identifying the key constraints to use and development of the coastal marine area

Identify the major constraints to the future use and development of the coastal marine area taking into account:

(a) The scale, location and requirement of existing uses and activities;

(b) The natural physical characteristics and values of the coastal environment;

(c) The particular requirements of identifiable future uses;

(d) The required links to the landward portion of the coastal environment, integral to the operation of uses and activities located in the coastal marine area; and

(e) The role of the coastal environment in accommodating regionally significant infrastructure.

CE 8B: Ensuring subdivision, use and development is appropriate to the natural character of the coastal environment

When assessing the effect of subdivision, use and development on the natural character of the coastal environment, particular regard shall be given to:

(a) The level of natural character as shown in Maps in Appendix I, as described in Appendix J, and the level of protection to be afforded by Policy CE 2B;

(b) The criteria contained in Set 1 of Appendix F to further refine natural character for resource consents or site-specific mapping;

(c) Maintaining coastal margins in a natural state and protecting the natural values of beaches and dune systems, including their ability to reduce the impacts of coastal hazards such as tsunami and storm surge;

(d) The appropriateness of the introduction or accumulation of man-made modifications recognising activities that are:

(e) planned (consented, zoned or designated);

(f) provided for in reserve management plans; or

(I) identified in Appendix C, D and E; or

(II) lawfully established;

(III) The provisions of Customary Marine Title Management Plans;

(IV) Subject to Policy CE 2B avoiding significant adverse effects and avoiding, remedying or mitigating (including, where appropriate, through provision of buffers) other adverse effects on:

(V) Visually, ecologically or culturally sensitive landforms, including ridgelines, coastal cliffs, beaches, headlands, and peninsulas and visually prominent public open space;

(VI) Estuaries, lagoons, wetlands and their margins (saline and freshwater), dune lands, rocky reef systems and areas of eelgrass and salt marsh;

(VII) Terrestrial and marine ecosystems;

(VIII) Natural patterns of indigenous and exotic vegetation and processes that contribute to the landscape and seascape value of the area; and

(IX) Regionally significant surf breaks and their swell corridors, including those at Matakana Island and the Whakatāne Heads;

(g) Encouraging efficient use of occupied space through intensification and clustering of developments, rather than sprawling, sporadic or unplanned patterns of settlement and urban growth;

(h) Setting buildings and structures back from the coastal marine area and other waterbodies where necessary, practicable and appropriate to protect natural character, open space, public access and amenity values of the coastal environment, while recognising some structures may have a functional need to be located in the coastal environment, for which a setback would be inappropriate.

Consistent with Policy 9 (Ports) of the NZCPS, RPS Policy CE 14B turns to the issue of 'providing for ports':

Recognise the national and regional significance of the Port of Tauranga and the need for it to be located within the coastal environment by:

(a) Safeguarding the capacity and efficiency of:

(i) Current port operations

(ii) Activities that have a functional need to be located in and around the port;

(iii) The strategic road, rail and sea routes to the port; and

(b) Providing, as appropriate, in the regional coastal plan, for future port operations and capacity; and

(c) Having regard to potential adverse effects on the environment, providing for the need to maintain shipping channels and to renew/replace structures as part of ongoing maintenance; ……

4.3 Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan

Outline Development Plans in Schedule 9 of the RCEP anticipate future developments within the Port Zone by PoTL. For completeness, the sheets within that schedule that are most relevant to the current application (pages 393 and 394 of the RCEP) are shown overleaf:

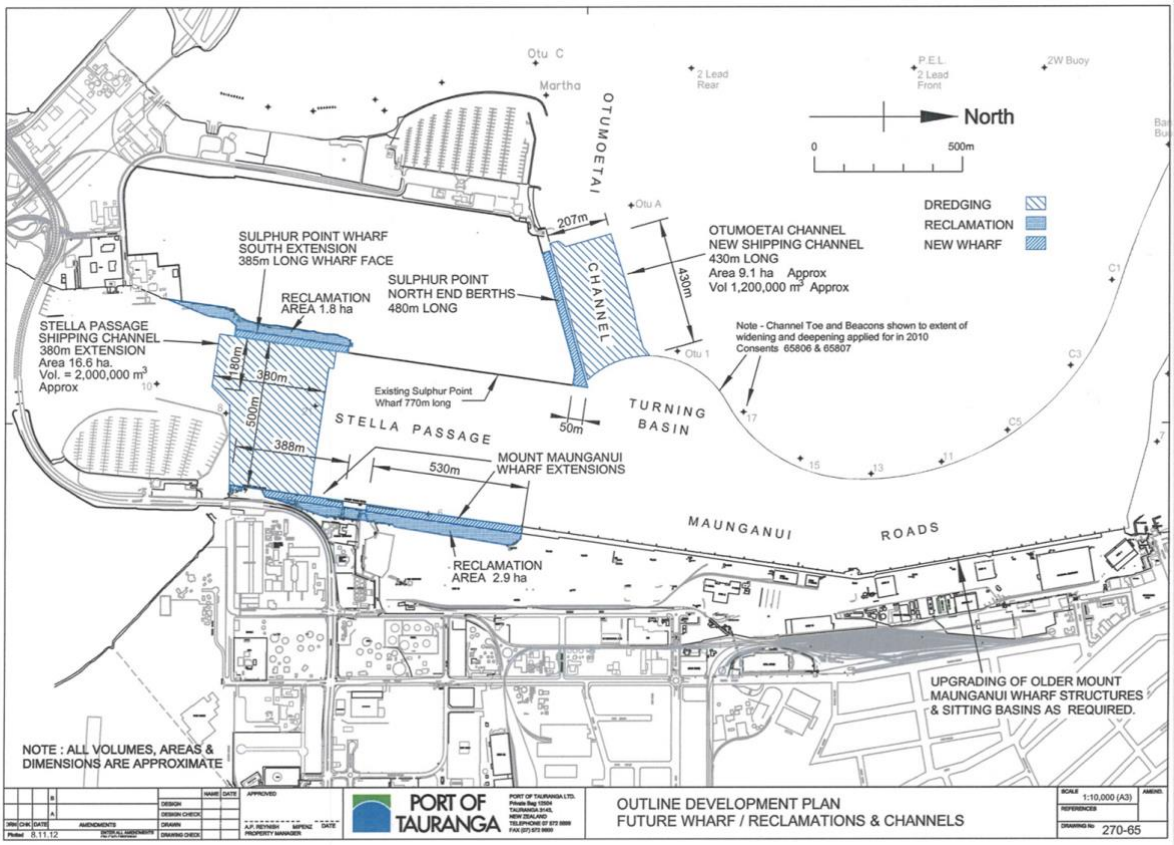

Figure 4. Outline Development Plan

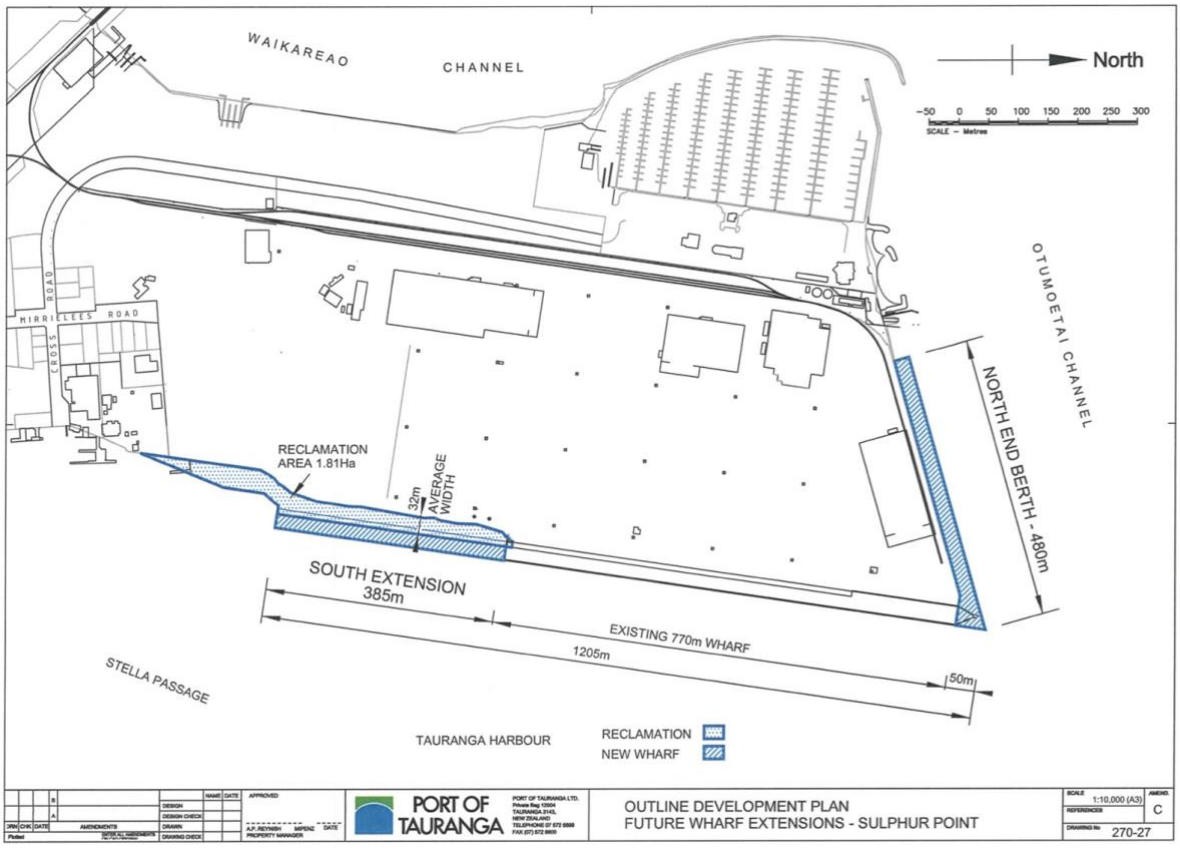

Figure 5. Outline Development Plan

Under the RCEP, the project requires resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity, in relation to :

- Other buildings and structures in the Port Zone (rule PZ 8);
- Cranes exceeding the permitted height or location (rule PZ 9);
- Specified dredging activities (Rule PZ 10); and
- Specified reclamations (rule PZ 11).

While two 'Matters of Discretion' pertain to any future container cranes, those solely relate to impacts on aviation, whereas PZ 8, PZ 10 and PZ 11 identify the following, landscape related, matters of discretion as needing to be assessed:

a) *The finished visual appearance* [of the buildings and structures] *when viewed from a public place.*

b) *The effects of glare and lighting.*

c) *Effects on the hydrodynamic and geomorphic regime of the harbour.*

d) *Effects on marine life and ecosystems.*

e) *Effects on coastal water quality including the provisions of Section 3.*

f) *Effects on site specific historical or cultural values under ss 6(e) or 7(a) of the RMA.*

More generally, the following Port Zone provisions help to contextualise this assessment:

2.10 Port Zone

Objective 52 *The current operational needs of the Port of Tauranga are provided for as a matter of priority while avoiding, remedying or mitigating the effects of those activities on cultural values and the environment.*

Objective 53 *The future expansion and operational needs of the Port of Tauranga and its shipping channels are provided for in appropriate locations, having regard to the potential adverse effects on the environment.*

9.1 Policies

Policy PZ1 *Recognise that the Port of Tauranga is pivotal to the regional economy and a significant component of the national economy, and that its continued operation is of national significance.*

Policy PZ2 *Recognise that provision for the development of additional shipping capacity, including capital dredging, in appropriate locations is important to the continued efficient operation of the Port of Tauranga.*

Policy PZ3 *Recognise that the structures, and capital dredging identified in Schedule 9 – Outline Development Plan Port of Tauranga, are appropriate within the Port Zone, subject to appropriate management of adverse effects.*

Policy PZ4 *Recognise that maintenance dredging within the Port Zone is necessary for the continued operation of the Port, and is appropriate where it is to provide for the purpose of the Port Zone as described in Policy PZ 5.*

Policy PZ5 *Provide for activities that are consistent with the purpose of the Port Zone, which is to:*

(a) Enable efficient use of existing port area, so that the regional community may meet its social and economic needs;

(b) Concentrate major new structural development in an area already modified, so that development is guided away from other coastal areas of

higher natural character, natural landscape, recreational value, and cultural value;

(c) Minimise potential conflict between port activities or port related activities and other activities; and

(d) Enable efficient and ongoing storage of vessels in the Tauranga Bridge Marina.

Activities that will significantly conflict with the achievement of the purpose or compromise Port operations should be avoided.

Policy PZ6 Provide for the use and development of existing port-related activities where these do not significantly conflict with the achievement of the purpose set out in Policy PZ 5 or compromise the operation of the Port of Tauranga or Port activities.

Policy PZ 14 also addresses the CMA, and states as follows:

PZ 14 Recognise that:

a) ASCV 4A and the shipping channels overlap, and that the extent of the shipping channel shown on ASCV 4A is the toe line and that the batter slopes formed will be within Te Paritaha O Te Awanui as will the necessary channel markers; and

b) Te Paritaha O Te Awanui is situated in a natural dynamic environment that changes and shifts over time.

The specific reference to Te Paritaha O Awanui is notable in terms of potential effects on the wider harbour while, in a related vein, other provisions address the preservation of natural character values and the protection of outstanding natural landscapes more generally:

2.2 Natural Heritage

Objective 2 Protect the attributes and values of:

(a) Outstanding natural features and landscapes of the coastal environment; and

(b) Areas of high, very high and outstanding natural character in the coastal environment;

from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development, and restore or rehabilitate the natural character of the coastal environment where appropriate.

Objective 3 Safeguard the integrity, form, functioning and resilience of the coastal environment and sustain its ecosystems by:

(a) Protecting Indigenous Biological Diversity Areas A,

(b) Maintaining Indigenous Biological Diversity Areas B;

(c) Promoting the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity in general; and

(d) Enhancing or restoring indigenous biodiversity where appropriate.

Objective 4 Prevent the further loss of the quality and extent of rare and threatened habitats in the coastal environment of the region. These include coastal forest, seagrass beds, saltmarsh wetlands and sand dunes.

Objective 5 Enable the restoration and rehabilitation of the natural heritage of the coastal environment, including:

(a) Kaimoana resources;

(b) Natural heritage landforms or features that would increase resilience to natural hazards, and

(c) Degraded cultural sites which tangata whenua wish to restore for natural heritage and cultural reasons.

4.4 The Tauranga City Plan

Under rule 18A.15.4.1 of the Tauranga City Plan, the proposed container cranes are again only subject to assessment in terms of their potential impact on aviation activities and safety.

Even so, with reference to the port area, Objective 18A.7.1 and Policy 18A.7.1.1 of the Tauranga City Plan address structures and development more generally within the Port Industry Zone, together with the management of effects generated by future activities:

> ***18A.7.1 Objective – Bulk and Scale of Buildings in the Port Industry Zone***
>
> *The infrastructural and operational needs of the Port of Tauranga are provided for as a matter of priority while limiting the effects of those activities on landscape character and the environment.*
>
> ***18A.7.1.1 Policy – Bulk and Scale of Buildings in the Port Industry Zone***
>
> *By providing for the operational needs of the Port within defined limits that minimise the impacts of activities and structures within the Port Industry Zone on landscape character.*

Other relevant provisions address the landscape and natural character values of the harbour environs more broadly, and effects on those values. They include the following:

> ***6A.1.7 Objective – Harbour Environment Landscape Character***
>
> *The landscape character values of the City's harbour environment is maintained and enhanced.*
>
> ***6A.1.7.1 Policy - Maintenance and Enhancement of Landscape Character of the Harbour Environment***
>
> *By ensuring that subdivision, use and development along the margins of Tauranga Harbour does not adversely affect the landscape character values of that environment by:*
>
> *a) Maintaining and enhancing the characteristics and elements that determine the amenity of the surrounding area;*
>
> *b) Ensuring the bulk and scale of built form is compatible with the character of the harbour environment;*
>
> *d) Maintaining and enhancing amenity between different land uses by screening, buffering or otherwise providing an appropriate interface treatment;*
>
> *e) Achieving a high amenity interface between private and public space;*
>
> *f) Maintaining and enhancing the natural character interface between urbanised and harbour margins environment;*
>
> *g) Protecting areas of cultural value;*
>
> *i) Siting buildings, structures, infrastructure and services to avoid or minimise visual impacts on the harbour margins environment;*
>
> *k) Maintaining and enhancing indigenous vegetation, notable trees and heritage trees;*
>
> *l) Managing the interface between urban activities and adjoining landscapes to maintain the integrity of identified outstanding natural features and landscapes and important amenity landscapes;*
>
> *m) Ensuring activities maintain and enhance the factors, values and associations of outstanding natural features and landscapes and/or important amenity landscapes.*
>
> ***6A.1.8 Objective – Interface with the Coastal Marine Area (being MHWS), Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Important Amenity Landscapes***
>
> *The open space character of the coastal marine area and the factors, values and associations of outstanding natural features and landscapes and important amenity landscapes and their margins is maintained and enhanced.*

6A.1.8.1 Policy – Interface with the Coastal Marine Area (being MHWS), Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Important Amenity Landscapes

By ensuring that buildings, structures and activities along the margins of the coastal marine area, outstanding natural features and landscapes and important amenity landscapes do not compromise the natural character, factors, values and associations of the those areas, through:

a) The impact of the bulk and scale of buildings, structures and activities on the amenity of the environment;

b) Significant modification of the existing landform or topography and the extent of earthworks;

d) Buildings, structures and activities detracting from the existing open space character and the factors, values and associations of outstanding natural features and landscapes and important amenity landscapes and their margins;

e) The effects on indigenous and exotic flora and fauna, with an overall goal to retain existing vegetation patterns and enhance those patterns around the outstanding natural features and landscapes and important amenity landscapes and their margins through mitigation planting.

Chapter 6 of the City Plan also addresses the protection of key views to Mauao, both from public vantage points and local marae (Appendices 6C and 6D). The Tauranga City Council's Mapi GIS portal shows the multiple viewshafts that are mapped in the City Plan as passing over Stella Passage, the Maunganui Roads and the harbour entrance – as they progress towards Mauao. The following is a summary of the viewshaft origin points, together with a map of the actual viewshafts (overleaf):

Appendix 6D - Views From Public Vantage Points:

1. Tamapahore Mangatawa
2. Tahuwhakatiki
3. Hungahungatoroa
4. Waikari
5. Hairini
6. Huria
7. Peterehema
8. Wairoa

Appendix 6C - Views From Public Vantage Points:

9. Grange Road
10. Poike Road / Hollister Lane
11. Maunganui Road
12. Papamoa Beach Road
13. Maunganui Road / Rata Street
14. Waikite Road
15. Ohauiti Road
16. Elms

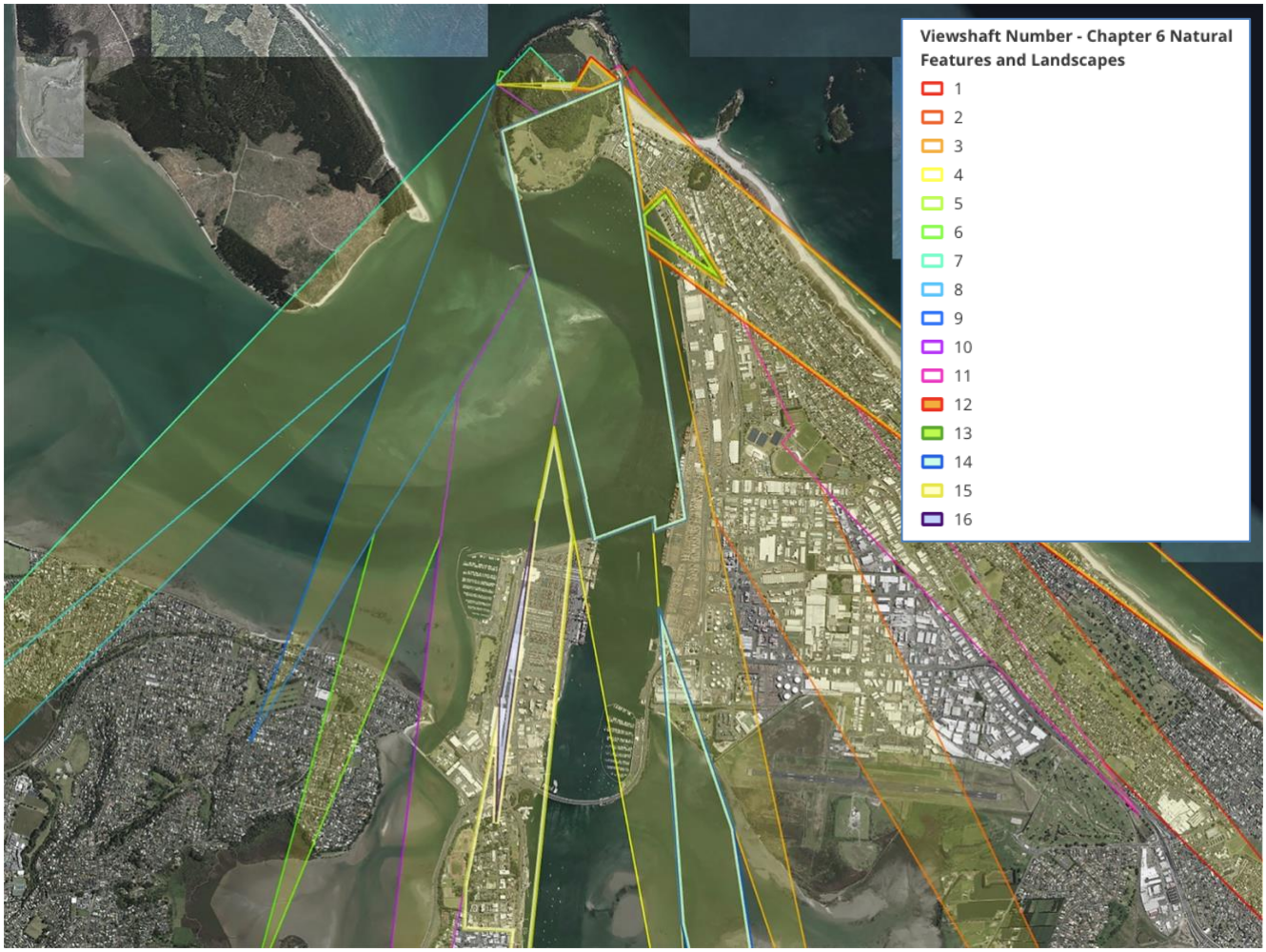

Figure 6. MAPI View of the multiple viewshafts to Mauao that traverse Stella Passage, the Maunganui Roads and harbour entrance

5. Iwi Management Plans and Published Histories

At least four iwi management plans address Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, of which the following are particularly relevant to the project:

Tauranga Moana Iwi Management Plan (2016-2026); and

Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Management Plan (1995).

In highlighting these iwi management plans, I need to reiterate that other management plans have been prepared by other iwi and hapū that also make reference to their associations with Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, the values that it holds for them, and the management strategies / policies that they consider the harbour should be subject to. Those other management plans include, for example, the *Matakana and Rangiwaea Islands Hapū Management Plan* (updated 2017) and the *Ngai Tukairangi - Ngai Tapu Hapū Management Plan* (2014). However, the two management plans referenced above provide more direct guidance about the cultural values and associations that tangata whenua have with those parts of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour near the Port. They also include policies that specifically address the Port's future development and management, while sharing many of the broader – harbour-wide – policy imperatives that are found in other management plans.

In addition, a number of published histories help to inform this assessment by addressing particular features and harbour properties / values that have been important to both iwi and pakeha in the past, and that remain significant in terms of cultural and public perceptions of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour. They include the following – in chronological order:

The Journal of the Tauranga Historical Society (Inc) No.29, Oct-Dec 1966, Tauranga Historical Society (Inc), (1966).

A History of Tauranga County, Evelyn Stokes (1980) Dunmore Press Ltd.

Stories of Tauranga Moana – Occasional Paper No.9, Dame Evelyn Stokes (1980), Centre of Māori Studies and Research University of Waikato.

Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal, Ngati Kahu, Ngati Rangi and Ngati Pango for the Wai 42a Claim, Antoine Coffin (1996).

Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal (Te Whenua O Te Kupu Whakaari, Ngai Tama Rawaho) for the Wai 215 and Wai 659 Claims, George Matua Evans (1997).

Te Raupatu O Tauranga Moana – Volume 2: Documents Relating to Tribal History, Confiscation and Reallocation of Tauranga Lands, Dame Evelyn Stokes, University of Waikato (1992).

Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal for the Wai 540 and Wai 215 Claims, Roimata Minhinick (1997).

Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal about Ngaiterangi and The Crown, Bassett Kay Research (1998).

Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal for the Wai 215 and Wai 672 Claims, Roimata Minhinick (1999).

The Central Tauranga Heritage Study Part One, Matthews and Matthews Architects (2008) for Tauranga City Council and Environment Bay of Plenty.

Tauranga Moana Fisheries, Reclamations and Foreshores Overview Report Volume 1 (Main Report), Robert A McLean (1999).

5.1 Iwi Management Plans

The Tauranga Moana Iwi Management Plan 2016-2026

At page 2 of this Management Plan, "*Tauranga Moana*" is described as comprising Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, including adjacent land and waters and the coastal marine area. The purpose of the Management Plan is to "*articulate the collective vision and aspirations of Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi and Ngāti Pūkenga, in relation to Tauranga Moana*". This overarching statement then leads into Parts A, B, C and D of the Management Plan which 'set the scene' and address the current harbour, outline policies applicable to it, discuss policy / plan implementation, and provide references to supporting documents.

From my reading of the Management Plan, the following are key statements:

> ***2. Tauranga Moana: Where Are We***
>
> ***Tō Tātou Tuakiri Our Identity:*** *Tauranga Moana is central to our cultural wellbeing and identity … …*
>
> ***Tō Tātou Taonga Our Treasure:*** *Tauranga Moana is a taonga, a life source and food bowl for marine life and our people. …..*
>
> ***Tō Tātou Tūranga Our Place:*** *Tauranga Moana is a beautiful place to wake up to every day and be able to take the whanau to just relax, gather kai and have fun. …..*

Part B of the Management Plan, addressing policies, states that a "*mātauranga-based policy framework has been used to articulate and organise resource management planning concepts and tools (e.g. policy) – as they relate to the health and wellbeing of Tauranga Moana - with a Māori lens*." The resulting policy framework includes a focus on "*Tūhauora Tinana: Healthy Waters*" and "*Tūhauora Wairua: Cultural Heritage*".

In Section 6.4 of the Management Plan this focus becomes more specifically targeted on the coast, including 'coastal development structures and dredging'. Among the coastal issues identified are those that relate to the mauri of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and its coastal margins, including:

> *"Coastal use and development, including port activities, marina development, dredging, reclamation, structures as well as recreational activities"; and*
>
> *Conflicts between values, such as between 'cultural values and interests', 'natural and ecological values' and 'existing uses and aspirations for further development'.*

Key **Coastal Objectives** are identified as comprising:

- *Water is clean enough for swimming and sustaining plentiful and healthy kaimoana.*

- *Waterways are accessible for our enjoyment and customary use. e.g. gather kaimoana.*
- *Our coastal sites and areas of cultural significance are acknowledged and actively protected.*
- *Ecosystems are healthy and diverse and are protected from biosecurity threats, including pest plants, fish and organisms.*
- *Cumulative impacts on water quality are investigated and managed.*
- *There is balance between natural, cultural, recreational and ecological values of Tauranga Moana and commercial use and development.*

Related **Policies** include:

POLICY 7 - Ensure a holistic and integrated management approach to restoring the health and wellbeing of coastal water within Tauranga Moana (including Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour).

POLICY 8 - Work together to address conflicting uses and values within Tauranga Moana (including Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour).

POLICY 9 - Avoid further degradation of water quality within Tauranga Moana.

POLICY 10 - Reduce the impacts of sediment on Te Awanui (Tauranga Harbour).

POLICY 12 - Maintain and enhance relationship with Port of Tauranga.

POLICY 14 - Avoid further reclamation of the foreshore and seabed.

POLICY 15 - Manage the effects of coastal structures (including moorings and jetties) and infrastructure in Tauranga Moana.

POLICY 16 - Ensure that dredging activities do not adversely affect the mauri of Tauranga Moana.

Of these, Policies 12, 14 and 16 are most directly pertinent to the project. The more relevant 'Actions' identified under these policies include:

12.1 *Tauranga Moana Iwi and hapū to continue working closely with Port of Tauranga to manage the effects of port activities on the cultural health of the harbour, in particular:*

a) Inner harbour activities, and expansion of these activities.

b) Changes to tidal flows, ebbs and flushes as a result of structures and/or reclamations.

c) Dredging and disposal of dredge spoil.

d) Water quality and pollution concerns……..

14.1 *Oppose any further reclamation of the foreshore and seabed.*

14.2 *For any reclamation proposal, Tauranga Moana Iwi and hapū must be involved to ensure that:*

a) tangata whenua values are recognised and provided for, particularly in relation to decision making.

b) there are no adverse effects on sites and areas of cultural significance or mahinga kai areas.

c) if required, a cultural impact assessment is prepared.

15.4 *In relation to the placement, alteration or extension of structures, within Tauranga Moana:*

a) Ensure that:

i) tangata whenua values are recognised and provided for.

ii) early and meaningful engagement occurs with Tauranga Moana Iwi and hapu ……

b) Avoid adverse effects on sites and areas of cultural significance, wetlands or mahinga kai areas.

16.1 *Oppose any further adverse effects as a result of dredging, in relation to:*

a) The pipi bed known as Te Paritaha o Te Awanui.

b) The sandbank area on Matakana Island known as Panepane.

16.2 *For any dredging proposal, Tauranga Moana Iwi and hapū must be involved to ensure that:*

a) tangata whenua values are recognised and provided for, particularly in relation to decision making.

b) there are no adverse effects on sites and areas of cultural significance or mahinga kai areas.

c) if required, a cultural impact assessment is prepared.

d) the effects of dredging on sites and areas of cultural significance or mahinga kai areas can be monitored. ……..

e) opportunities to use dredged materials are explored to address coastal erosion near areas of high significance to tangata whenua e.g. marae, pa site, urupa.

These policies present a holistic concept of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour as a body of sea and land that is inseparable from its constituent 'parts', the value attached to its life force including as a source of food (mahinga kai), and the desire for protection of key harbour features, including wetlands, Te Paritaha and Panepane. Yet, they also take a quite pragmatic approach to management of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, with the "*Policy Explanation*" section also promoting a 'balanced' approach to both conservation and development. Thus, Policy 8.1(d) seeks to identify discrete no-development areas, while policies 15.1, 15.2 and 15.3 oppose specific structures in certain locations but otherwise (policy 15.4) entertains the presence of structures subject to iwi involvement in planning processes. Thus, in relation to the Port of Tauranga (Policy 12.1) there is a strong focus on PoTL working with iwi and hapū in relation to:

- The Port's activities and any expansion of them;
- Changes to the hydrological flows within those parts of the harbour associated with the Port – seemingly, its entrance past Panepane and Mauao (as per Policy 16.1 above), the Maunganui Roads and Stella Passage in particular;

- Dredging and spoil disposal; and
- Water quality and pollution.

In effect, it appears that the management plan's cultural 'bottom lines' are strongly focused on further dredging within the harbour, the related modification of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's geomorphology and hydrological flows, and adverse effects on water quality. At the same time, Policy 14 is clearly opposed to any further reclamation within Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour as a whole.

The Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Management Plan 1995

Ngāi te Rangi iwi is one of the three iwi responsible for the production and implementation of the Tauranga Moana Iwi Management Plan 2016 -2026 discussed above. Even so, Ngāi te Rangi's 1995 Iwi Management Plan focuses on its own specific values and areas of concern. In relation to Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, Section 2.4 the Management Plan therefore asserts that:

> *The Tauranga harbour, inland waterways and estuaries are of special significance to Ngaiterangi. The increasing industrial, commercial, residential, and recreational activities taking place on and around the harbour and their effects on the quality of the harbour waters, wildlife, and kaimoana beds are a cause for continuing concern amongst the hapu of Ngaiterangi.*
>
> *Ngaiterangi hapu still exercise customary fishing and seafood harvesting practices m the harbour and bays. The most common kaimoana harvested includes patiki, titiko, pupu, tuangi, ureroa, scallops, as well as a range of wetfish. With the increasing growth of the city and port of Tauranga there has been a noticeable decline, and in some cases disappearance of kaimoana in the area.*
>
> *Dredging of the harbour, and the construction of the harbour bridge have combined to alter tidal flows, affecting kaimoana beds and their locations. The discharge of wastes into the harbour also raises concerns about the quality of the kaimoana, and associated health issues……*

The related policy statement states:

> *Activities on or around the harbour and inland waterways must be controlled in order to maintain and enhance the harbour and estuarine ecosystems, its related value as a food source for tangata whenua, and as a recreational amenity for the wider community.*
>
> *The quality of the harbour is to be enhanced and maintained through the following measures:*
>
> - *All residential, commercial, and industrial activities that involve the discharge of material into the Tauranga harbour, or that affect the physical appearance, or ecosystem of the harbour will require a resource management consent. The granting of such resource consents is to be discretionary. Where resource consents are granted, a levy is to be imposed which is to be paid into a fund to be established for ongoing harbour care and protection.*

Focusing directly on the Port of Tauranga and its activities, Section 2.5 of the Management Plan includes the following policy statement:

> *Ngaiterangi recognises the contribution the Port of Tauranga makes to the economic growth of the region. There is a need to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability (environmental sustainability includes the need to protect the special relationship that tangata whenua have with the environment). Where the two are in conflict, environmental sustainability*

must take precedence. All activities of the Port of Tauranga must be undertaken in terms of this ethic.

- *Only essential dredging of the harbour required to maintain shipping lanes and remove sediment/sand build up, should take place.*
- *Sand dredgings must first be made available for the restoration or maintenance of estuarine beaches and foreshores, and for other projects that are consistent with good environmental management.*
- *The natural physical appearance of the harbour is to be retained. Future development plans of the Port of Tauranga must have regard to the need to both protect and contribute to the maintenance of, the harbour.*

This suggests a degree of weighing up of the Port's positive (non-landscape) effects with those environmental impacts that may have landscape and natural character implications. In particular, it implies that the Port's geomorphological and hydrological effects, together with those specific to Te Paritaha and Panepane, need to be balanced against the economic benefits of the Port and related activities. It is unclear if there are any 'bottom lines' in this regard, although the more general policy statements about protecting ancestral lands and kaimoana areas might be a step in that direction.

The Management Plan then goes on to address waahi tapu and cultural heritage sites which might also be regarded as absolute 'no go' areas, together with related matters – including views to, and the appearance of, Mauao – before addressing resource management issues of significance within the rohe of individual hapū and marae. Among the issues identified as being of significance for Ngāi Tukairangi are the (Section 3.1):

- *"activities of the Port of Tauranga and their effects on the harbour, estuary, ecosystem, marae*"; and
- "*industrialisation of the Port area and the effects on Whareroa Marae*".

These are elaborated on at Section 3.1.3, which states that:

> *The Whareroa Marae has suffered heavily from the effects of industrialisation of the port area. The marae is now hemmed in by sulphur works, petrol and oil storage sites, timber treatment and other types of factories, the Tauranga Harbour bridge and its associated causeway, and recreational boating berths. Customary mahinga mataitai areas off the marae foreshore, where kaimoana was harvested to support tangihanga and other marae activities, have been destroyed ……*

Again, this section of the Management Plan focuses very strongly on the biophysical effects of further port expansion and activities within Stella Passage and the Maunganui Roads channel. It also emphasises the cumulative impact that past industrial and port development has had on Whareroa Marae.

5.2 Published Histories

The history of Tauranga, Mt Maunganui and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour is, for the most part, wide ranging. Consequently, while many of the 'published histories' described above reference the harbour as a whole and the features associated with it – like Mauao and Matakana Island – few directly address

that part of the harbour in the direct vicinity of Stella Passage, or what are now the Mt Maunganui and Sulphur Point berths. At this broader level, some of the histories also describe local taniwha: Poriori and Te Pura associated with the Wairoa River[1] and Mangatawa[2] – the whale guardian of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour – while Antoine Coffin's 1996 report for the Waitangi Tribunal also describes the importance of the Wairoa River as a conduit between Tauranga Harbour and the interior of the Bay of Plenty. Others, though, help to explain the appeal of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and its surrounds to early Māori settlers[3]:

> *……. The region which forms Tauranga County was particularly favourable for settlement of a large Maori population. The climate was mild. The harbour of Tauranga and lagoons around Maketu provided safe anchorage. The name Tauranga means Anchorage, resting place or fishing ground. The long and varied coastline provided a variety of habitats in estuaries, mud flats, swamps, open sandy beach and rocky shore, for a variety seafood, especially the shell fish, pipi, tuatua and paua, as well as kina (sea urchins) and koura (crayfish). A wide variety of fish could be caught in the rivers, sheltered harbour waters and the open ocean. ……..*

Yet, the area's abundance also created competition for its kaimoana and other resources[4]:

> *…… The great canoe Tainui first landed at Whangaparaoa and then sailed west across the Bay of Plenty, searching for a place where the people could settle down. They saw the headland of Mauao and decided to investigate this shore. They saw the waves crashing on the rocks at the base of Mauao and steered well clear. They did not know about the sandbank called Ruahine. The great canoe grounded on the sandbank. It was stuck fast. All efforts to pull her off into deeper water failed. The commander was Hoturoa and he thought there must be a reason for this mishap, some evil omen at work. He looked around and found the cause in the old lady called Wahinerua. Hotu ordered this kuia to be thrown overboard and her body thrust under the hull of the canoe. The men heaved again and paddled furiously. The canoe slowly moved over the body of Wahinerua and slipped off the sandbank into deeper water. ……*
>
> *……. The great canoe Tainui sailed on into Tauranga Moana and anchored in the deep waters south-east of Rangiwaea. This place was called Tauranga, an anchorage o resting place, and this is how this name was given to the district of Tauranga Moana. For a time the people of Tainui stayed but the region was already well populated. If Tainui were to settle here, they would have to fight for land to live on They decided to move on and not to overstay their welcome. The canoe was paddled toward the western reaches of the harbour. A stop was made at Te Puna At Poututeranga a thanksgiving was offered to the gods for a safe passage from Hawaiki*
>
> *As the canoe Tainui moved on up the harbour, Hoturoa realised they were approaching shallow waters. Off Opuhi on Matakana they stopped again to unload some of their ballast so that the canoe could glide safely through the shallows and over the mudflats of the western harbour. There is a. big pile of boulders just off Opuhi, of a kind of rock not found anywhere else on Matakana. This is Ratahi, the ballast of the canoe Tainui. And some of the old people will say that those boulders are still growing bigger every year.*
>
> *Near Katikati, the headland now called Bowentown at the western entrance of Tauranga Moana, the canoe Tainui moved into deeper waters. Here another stop was made. The Ngamarama people here made the Tainui visitors very welcome. A few of the Tainui people were so happy there, they decided to stay and married local people. The rest of the people of Tainui moved on. ……..*

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1 Pp.67-70 *Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal, Ngati Kahu, Ngati Rangi & Ngati Pango for the Wai 42a Claim*, Antoine Coffin (1996)

2 Pp.13 &14 *Stories of Tauranga Moana – Occasional Paper No.9*, Dame Evelyn Stokes (1980), Centre of Māori Studies and Research University of Waikato

3 Pp.21 & 22 *A History of Tauranga County*, Dame Evelyn Stokes (1980) Dunmore Press Ltd.

4 Pp.45 & 46 *Stories of Tauranga Moana – Occasional Paper No.9*, Dame Evelyn Stokes (1980), Centre of Māori Studies and Research University of Waikato.

Dame Evelyn Stoke's 1992 publication – *Te Raupatu O Tauranga Moana Volume 2: Documents Relating to Tribal History, Confiscation and Reallocation of Tauranga* – helps to link this early history of Tauranga to the present-day distribution of iwi around its moana in a quite concise manner[5]:

> *…….. The Tauranga district has a history of intense Maori occupation probably going back over a thousand years, which is reflected in the abundance of archaeological sites on the coastal lowlands and islands of the harbour. The basis of this occupation is the abundant food resources of the region, especially the resources of the harbour, kaimoana, sea foods. For this reason the district has been fought over many times, as various groups sought access to this food resource. In the course of this long occupation, many cultural and historical associations have been developed with local landmarks, harbour features, fishing grounds and shellfish beds, wahi tapu (sacred places), urupa (burial grounds), pa (fortified villages) and kainga (unfortified villages). These associations remain, regardless of present ownership of land.*
>
> *The focus of the tribal area of Tauranga Moana as this name implies, is the harbour. It is occupied by various hapu (subtribes) of Ngaiterangi and Ngati Ranginui of Mataatua and Takitimu descent respectively·. As such it is a self contained tribal area with its own organisations incorporating both tribes, independent of the larger tribal confederations of Tainui to the west and Te Arawa to the east. There are 24 marae mostly located around the shores of the harbour ……..*
>
> *…… In the traditional culture of Tauranga Moana the harbour was as much, if not more significant than the land. It was the source of food, and the means of access and continuing communication between the village communities around its shores. This is expressed in the whakatauki (saying) which describes the tribal area.*
>
> *Ko Mauao te maunga*
>
> *Ko Tauranga te moana*
>
> *Ko Tupaea te tangata*
>
> *Mauao, or Mount Maunganui, is the sacred mountain, Tauranga is the sea or harbour, the most important landscape feature of the tribal area, and Tupaea is the man, the nineteenth century chief whose mana extended over the whole tribal area. The mana of the tribes of Tauranga Moana extended over both sea and land. …….*
>
> *The mana of the tribes of Tauranga Moana has traditionally been associated with their control of kaimoana, seafoods. The mana of the tribes today is still measured by their ability to provide a wide variety of seafoods at marae gatherings. Visitors from other tribal areas expect to be able to enjoy this traditional form of hospitality when they visit Tauranga marae. It is a matter of tribal honour that this tradition should be maintained.*

Other histories also focus on both the harbour itself and Mauao as key landmarks and landscape features[6]:

> *Ko Mauao te Maunga*
>
> *Ko Tauranga te Moana*
>
> *This proverbial saying is a figurative way of describing the area through its most prominent landmark, the sacred mountain of Mauao, and its most important landscape feature, the Tauranga Moana, (harbour or sea). Over time, the person whose name was recited at the end of the above saying changed as the arrival of each waka upon Te Tai Rawhiti changed the landscape slightly. The Tauranga district has a history of intense occupation 'probably going back over a thousand years'. The moana itself was rich in food, and an important means of communication to the hapu and iwi who governed its shores. Signs of past Maori occupation are evident in the extensive earthworks and many middens on Mauao which can still be seen today. …..*

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5 Pp.35, 37 & 39 *Te Raupatu O Tauranga Moana – Volume 2: Documents Relating to Tribal History, Confiscation and Reallocation of Tauranga Lands*, Dame Evelyn Stokes (1992), University of Waikato.

6 P. 10 *Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal for the Wai 540 & Wai 215 Claims*, Roimata Minhinick (1999).

In addition, the importance of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour to the local tribes and marae, both physically and spiritually, is also explained in many of the local histories . In particular, its importance as a source of kaimoana is repeatedly described in various reports prepared for the Waitangi Tribunal, together with the importance of its health and the exercise of kaitiaki over it, eg[7]:

> *……. The estuaries of Oreanui and Waikareao were a major food supply for Ngai Tama Rawaho and once had an abundance of kaimoana. The entrance to the Tauranga harbour between Panepane on Matakana, and Mauao on the Maunganui is opposite the isthmus of Otumoetai The mountain fed rivers and streams ensured a plentiful supply of fresh water to maintain a balance in salinity levels of the inner harbour waters, creating a unique habitat.*
>
> *The unpolluted waters, free of sediment and debris, at particular times of the year provided an ideal habitat for the masses of spawning kahawai. They were the principle species of a long food chain which extended well beyond Tuhua. The migration pattern of fish determined the Ngai Tama Rawaho social interaction with other hapu, marking the seasons to allow inland hapu the opportunity to partake in the harvest of seafood. Sadly today this is not the situation. …….*

Perhaps unsurprising, therefore, many of those same reports also raise significant concerns about development within, and management of, Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour in Tauranga's post-colonial era[8]:

> *……. The destruction of wahi tapu and the deprivation of the use of waterways resulting from the Tauranga Joint Generation Committee actions in the late 1960s, led to Ngati Hangarau Kaumatua, Kaikohe Roretana stating:*
>
> > *Omanawa and Te Korokoro falls were used to prophesy good luck and ill fortune and death. When Koro Koro sounded, it was a sign of bad luck and sometimes death, while Omanawa Falls were a sign of good luck. We are proud of our fortune tellers which foretold the luck of the Tribe. When you go into this land and treat it as common earth you make yourselves vandals in our eyes.*
>
> *This korero is reflected in the waiata composed by Te Turupa 'mo tana hoa a Kereti' who was killed at the battle of Te Ranga in 1864. Both were of Ngati Hangarau. …….*
>
> *…… Thus the waterways were part of the people, a part of Ngati Hangarau history retold when expressed in traditional waiata. Traditional ties of Ngati Hangarau also amounted to shared guardianship, authority and control Some areas within their rohe were managed by whanau on behalf of the Hapu (such as the Ngamanawa area and surrounding waterways), shared between Hapu on behalf of the Iwi (such as the Wairoa river) or defended by Hapu of each Iwi over the whole of the Tauranga Moana (such as against the Crown at the battles of Pukehinahina Gate Pa and Te Ranga). According to Alice Rerepeti Tuira, a kuia of Ngati Hangarau, the Hapu have used, protected and developed these waters in conjunction with the need to preserve them for ture generations since the arrival of the waka Takitimu.*
>
> *The exercise of tino rangatiratanga by Ngati Hangarau within their rohe is also reflected .in the occupation and use of the area. The basis of this occupation was the abundance of food resources. ……*

Some of those concerns, which encompass the area within the rohe of Ngāi Te Rangi, also touch on the Port's development and activities associated with it[9]:

> *……. The use of the harbour and pa sites around the harbour as public recreation facilities creates a conflict with Ngaiterangi cultural values. The result of such usage has been the desecration of significant wahi tapu. Ngaiterangi maintain that the foreshores were never sold to the Crown and*

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7 P.21 *Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal (Te Whenua O Te Kupu Whakaari, Ngai Tama Rawaho) for the Wai 215 & Wai 659 Claims*, George Matua Evans (1997).

8 Pp.8 & 9 *Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal for the Wai 215 & Wai 672 Claims*, Roimata Minhinick (1999).

9 P.11 *Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal about Ngaiterangi & The Crown*, Bassett Kay Research (1998).

remain Ngaiterangi land. Since at least 1885 Ngaiterangi have been requesting that their customary rights over these areas and the harbour as a whole be recognised.

The Crown's legislation vesting control of the harbour in the Tauranga Harbour Board failed to provide for Ngaiterangi representation…….

……. The large scale development of the international cargo port at Mount Maunganui has severely impacted on the ability of Ngaiterangi to exercise their customary rights over the foreshore. The development of the port was encouraged and facilitated by the Crown. The development was seen as being of national benefit, and the drive to develop the region took precedence over any Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities. …….

……. While Ngaiterangi have been protesting their loss of tino rangatiratanga over the harbour for more than 100 years, the level of impact on the harbour and wahi tapu has grown sharply in the last 50 years, …….. This was a period of rapid industrial and residential expansion in the Bay of Plenty……

…… Ngaiterangi have consistently argued that they have a strong association with the harbour. Hori Ngatai said:

> My mana over these places has never been taken away. I have always held authority over these fishing places and preserved them and no tribe is allowed to come here and fish without my consent being given.

Ngaiterangi made no distinction between areas above and below the high water mark. Both were important resources. The harbour for Ngaiterangi was an invaluable resource as a food source and communication link. The foreshores or mudflats around the harbour, as well as being significant food gathering and growing resources, were also used for settlements. The coastal sands and swamps were valued as food sources. Because the harbour and the surrounding lands played a part in the daily existence of Ngaiterangi it has therefore been considered a source of mana that deserves and requires protection. A desire to protect the harbour is evident in the customs that have developed that recognise the relationship Ngaiterangi have with the harbour and their sense of kaitiakitanga. Ngaiterangi have increasingly felt the loss of this Kaitiakitanga over the harbour and foreshores. …..

…….. The value of the harbour has been recognised and fought over by a number of iwi and as a result:

> *many cultural and historical-associations have been developed with local landmarks, harbour features, fishing grounds and shellfish beds, wahi tapu (sacred places), urupa (burial grounds), pa (fortified villages) and kainga (unfortified villages). These associations remain, regardless of present ownership of land.*

Therefore, well before the arrival of Pakeha in the area Ngaiterangi were guided by custom in their relationship with the harbour. These customs established territorial and accepted usage patterns between iwi and hapu. These customary rights or rules were the lore that established the law about where and when fish could be gathered and by whom. This had the effect of protecting the resource and maintaining the balance of power between iwi ……

….. At no time have Ngaiterangi given -up their duty of kaitiakitanga over the harbour….

The concerns expressed by Ngāi Te Rangi in the last of these documents reflect the historic evolution of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's occupation and use, but also bring the iwi's associations with, and attachments to, it into the 21st Century. They are consistent with the values and associations described in both the *Tauranga* Moana Iwi and Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Management Plans, with much attention drawn to:

- Balancing development and conservation within Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour;
- Protecting Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's water quality and ecological health;
- Maintaining associations with, and protecting, marine mammals;
- Protecting Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's kaimoana, including a wide range of fish and shell fish species;

- Maintaining the role of iwi as kaitiaki / guardians of the harbour and its sea life; and
- Protecting key landmarks and landscape features within and around the harbour, such as Mauao.

6. Effects Assessment Methodology

Assessments addressing changes to urban and coastal environments and landscapes often refer to a range of effects: visual, landscape, natural character and amenity. The following summaries help to clarify the distinctions between these different types of effect. In particular, they make it clear that the focus of this study is primarily on Landscape Effects and Natural Character Effects. Visual change can, in turn alter or modify, landscapes and freshwater environments, without necessarily having an effect in its own right. At the same time, there is often strong overlap between Landscape and Amenity Effects. Accordingly, visual change is considered in relation to all three related types of effect – Landscape, Natural Character and Amenity – within this report.

6.1 Visual Change

Visual change and 'effects' reflect changes to the visual composition, configuration and character of a locality and / or landscape, together with the perceived scale of such changes – in terms of their relative prominence and legibility. Yet, an assessment of visual change does not address the values associated with such change, which are more appropriately addressed in relation to the landscape, amenity and natural character attributes of an area. Visual change and 'effects' are, essentially, devoid of value: they convey a sense of the magnitude of visible change that would be experienced from a viewpoint or viewpoints, but not the impact that this has on the values and identity of the subject site and its surrounds. As such, visual change is no more than a stepping stone to addressing the more meaningful range of effects on landscape, amenity and natural character values – as appropriate to any given situation.

6.2 Landscape Effects

"Landscape" is an all-encompassing term. The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (**NZILA**) Charter (2010) describes "*Landscape*" as being "*the cumulative expression of natural and cultural elements, pattern and processes in a geographical area."* Moreover, the Charter's Preamble offers the following, slightly more fulsome, description of landscapes:

> *"Landscapes are the result of unique combinations of biophysical, cultural and social processes, evolving over time and interwoven with memory, perception and tradition. They include land, water systems and marine areas, and play a vital role in human nurture, fulfilment and in shaping individual and collective identity. Landscapes range from the outstanding and the memorable, to the familiar and commonplace …."*

In addition, the NZILA's *Te Tangi A Te Manu*[10] *– Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 2022* (p. 35, section 4.22) – identifies landscape values as comprising three 'layers' of attributes:

[10] P.35 *Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines* (2022)

Physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions

The current professional practice of conceptualising 'landscape' as the overlap of its physical, associative, and perceptual dimension is reflected in 'case law' including the following recent decision[11]:

> *"Landscape means the natural and physical attributes of land together with air and water which change over time and which is made known by people's evolving perceptions and associations."*
>
> *"In keeping with the Act such a definition enables the development of landscape assessment which takes account of:*
>
> 1. *natural and physical environment: and*
> 2. *perceptual; and*
> 3. *associative aspects (beliefs, uses, values and relationships) which may change over time"*

As such, landscape effects relate to modification of both the biophysical and sensory (or perceptual) characteristics and values of an environment. Often, these are addressed in terms of changes to the biophysical values within a landscape, together with its visual legibility and memorability, expressiveness, aesthetic value, and its sense of place or identity and other 'associative' matters. Changes to the character and values of a landscape may also affect people's appreciation of its cultural and historical dimensions.

6.3 Natural Character Effects

"Natural character" values and effects overlap with landscape effects, but have more of an emphasis upon effects that impair, or otherwise alter, the naturalness of the coastal environment in terms of its biophysical attributes and characteristics, together with its perceived character. Policy 13(2) of the NZCPS provides further direction in this regard, by identifying some of the elements / features / characteristics associated with natural character values (Section 5.1).

Thus, coastal environments that are highly natural will be much more sensitive and susceptible to the effects of change than those that are already highly developed and modified. Yet, whereas landscape values can often be 'driven' by one or two key factors (e.g. the dramatic profile of Mauao and local / iwi connections with the maunga), natural character values tend to 'step' in line with the combined natural qualities of any environment – covering its water bodies, geomorphology and landforms, vegetation cover, land uses / activities and wider 'context'. Locations of high natural character value will generally reflect high levels of naturalness across all of these layers. Consequently, natural character effects are derived from changes to the characteristics of a coastal environment, either in part or whole, that affect its elements, features, patterns, and processes. These effects become adverse when such changes diminish that coastal environment's biophysical and/or perceived degree of naturalness.

11 Paras: 300-301 *[2011] NZEnvC 384, Mainpower NZ Limited v Hurunui District Council, ('Mount Cass Wind Farm'),*

6.4 Amenity Effects

Effects on amenity values, in terms of Section 7(c) of the RMA, overlap with those on the 'sensory' and 'associative' qualities attached to landscape values, insofar as the description of 'amenity values' in the RMA describes them as comprising:

> *those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes.*

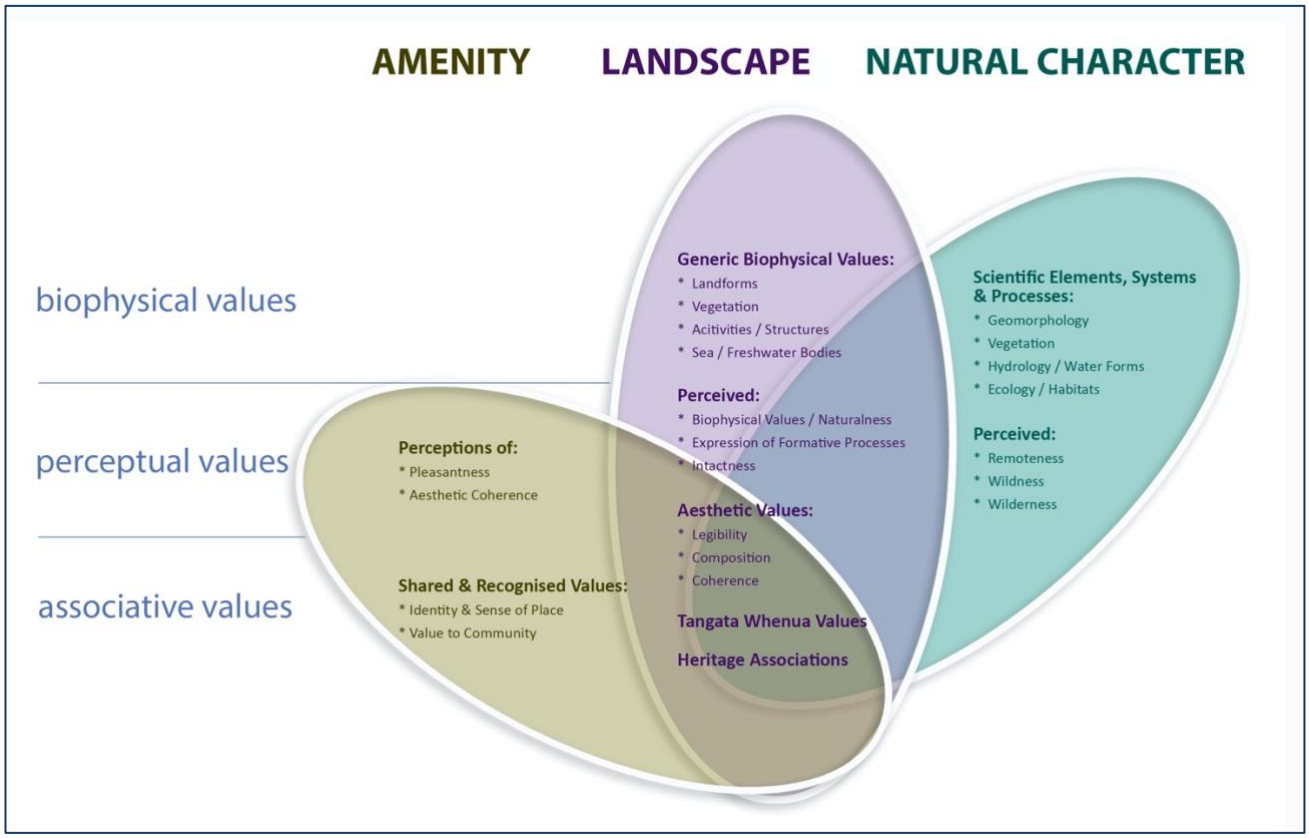
This indicates that 'amenity' pertains to areas that are known, understood and appreciated by those who live within them or visit them – often on a reasonably regular basis. Amenity values also relate to such factors as noise, lighting, smells and awareness of activity and movement; in effect, the fuller spectrum of sensory factors that contribute to perception and appreciation of an area's character, pleasantness and aesthetic coherence. Inevitably, this also brings into play perceptions of identity and sense of place that reflect the more particular, even unique, qualities of a locality or environment. Concepts of familiarity, shared ownership (in a figurative sense) and pride of place are also important in this regard. Finally, Section 7(c) refers to "*cultural and recreational attributes*", which often pertains to areas used for both passive and more active recreation. Consequently, amenity effects arise from changes to, and degradation of, these qualities. This can include 'nuisance' effects that degrade the 'pleasantness', 'aesthetic coherence' and other values associated with a particular locale – which often pertain to such matters as:

- Visual dominance or over-dominance
- Loss of open space and perceived spaciousness
- Encroachment on privacy
- Over-shadowing
- Noise.

6.5 Summary

To summarise, Table 1 (overleaf) identifies the various 'factors' / criteria associated with Amenity, Landscape and Natural Character values, together with their identification.

Table 1.



NOTE: Although Table 1 appears to show discrete columns of 'factors' / criteria below *Amenity, Landscape* and *Natural Character*, there are key areas of overlap:

- across all three columns in relation to "Perceptual Values";
- between *Landscape* and *Natural Character* in terms of Biophysical Values; and
- between *Amenity* and *Landscape* in relation to Associative Values.

In fact, Tangata Whenua Values and some Heritage Associations also contribute to Natural Character values, but this table focuses on the areas of strongest overlap and difference.

Correlating with both Table 1 and *Te Tangi a te* Manu[12] the assessment of effects in this report addresses the three landscape dimensions outlined above:

Biophysical Effects (Section 7):

In relation to Stella Passage and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's geomorphology, hydrology, water quality and marine species – primarily marine mammals such as dolphins and orca. This section of the report relies on input from the PoTL's other technical experts.

Perceptual / Experiential Effects (Section 8):

Focusing on change to the perceived character and values of Stella Passage and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, both during daytime and at night-time. This assessment was undertaken by myself using best practice assessment methods in conformity with *Te Tangi a te Manu*.

[12] Pp. 79 & 80 Te Tangi a Te Manu NZILA Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 2022)

Cultural / Associative Effects (Section 8):

> Taking into account discussions with representatives of Ngāi Te Rangi iwi (Whareroa Marae) in the course of a site visit to Whararoa and other Tauranga marae on the 2nd of April 2022 and a joint Teams meeting to discuss cultural effects on the 4th March 2025 (Iwi / Hapu Information Forum No.5 organised by Ella Pita), together with my review of the *Tauranga Moana and Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Management Plans*, and Tauranga's published histories.

As indicated above, the evaluation of biophysical affects relies very largely on empirical / scientific research and assessment undertaken by other PoTL experts. As a result, the assessments of effects in relation to both the biophysical 'layer' of landscape and natural character values are largely derived from a review of scientific findings, such as Dr Willem De Lange's analysis of the proposed dredging areas within Stella Passage. These findings help to explain the effects that project would have on the biophysical environments of Stella Passage, ASCV-4A and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, and their 'naturalness'. In turn, they contribute to my assessment of both landscape and natural character effects (as a whole). Consequently, the biophysical effects that would arise from the project are addressed in Section 7 of this report – as a precursor to my evaluation of effects on perceptual and experiential landscape values and natural character.

As is shown in Table 1, these values, and effects on them, are inextricably linked. They pertain to human perception and appreciation of Stella Passage and the wider environment of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour (in particular), as well as the associations that both iwi and the wider community have with those parts of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour potentially affected by the port expansion projects. Consequently, the impact that they would have on perceptual and experiential values – together with perceived natural character values – are assessed jointly in Section 8 of this report. This includes assessment of stages 1 and 2 of the project from specific viewpoints that represent the various receiving environments and audiences arrayed around the Port and Stella Passage.

7. Biophysical Effects

7.1 Range of Effects

The biophysical effects addressed in this section under the umbrella of natural character effects comprise the following:

Geomorphological / Bathymetric effects: addressing changes to the geomorphology and nature of the harbour floor, focused primarily on Stella Passage and its connections with the main body of the Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, including any effects on Te Paritaha (ASCV-4a) and the coastal margins near Whareroa Marae.

Hydrological and water quality effects: concentrating on changes to the flow of water through Stella Passage and any impacts generated by the proposed reclamation and dredging on the water quality within both the Passage and wider Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour – including that generated by the plumes emanating from dredging operations.

Sea Floor Ecological Effects: pertaining to the ecological and habitat values of Stella Passage, Te Paritaha and associated areas of harbour floor, including any impacts on Te Paritaha's kaimoana.

In each case, these are matters that are subject to expert assessment by specialists in these fields. As a result, the effects identified in relation to these areas of assessment are simply summarised in this report and reference the more detailed investigations undertaken by the various biophysical specialists engaged by PoTL to help reach conclusions about the natural character effects and cultural landscape impacts that the proposed dredging, reclamations, berths, and port activities would generate overall.

7.2 Bathymetric, Hydrodynamic and Water Quality Effects

The undersea profile and bathymetry of the inner harbour – stretching from a still largely natural harbour entrance between Mauao and Matakana Island to a highly structured, Stella Passage – has existed largely in its current state since 1992. By then, Sulphur Point had been developed and capital dredging to form the current navigation channel and berth pockets had been completed. That dredging was supplemented by further deepening and widening of the channel in 2015-16. Although physically bookended by the more open, and, for the most part, still more natural, waters of both the outer harbour and Waipu Bay, the contrast between Stella Passage and the rest of the Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour is therefore very marked. Constrained by its straight lines of berths, shipping and related industrial development both sides of the Passage, it clearly lies at the highly modified end of the landscape and natural character spectrum (**Attachments 2, 3 & 10-12**).

Just outside Stella Passage, there is also a marked contrast between the naturally convex form of Te Paritaha and the much more structured, flat-bottomed, profile of the Maunganui Roads navigation channel that curves around it – both towards Stella Passage and the harbour entrance. With the western edge of the Maunganui Roads channel directly abutting the eastern toe of Te Paritaha, this point of transition also demarcates both the edge of ASCV-4a and the eastern edge of ONFL 3. Although this division is not apparent in most views of, and across, the sea's surface, it becomes more apparent in elevated views from Mauao. These reveal the darker hued waters of the navigation channel, contrasting with the much lighter colouring of Te Paritaha, especially at mid to low tide. The passage of shipping through the navigation channel also helps to locate it in such views (**Attachment 10**). Indeed, irrespective of the vantage point, this division – between the more and less modified 'halves' of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour – is clearly reflected in the nature and intensity of development also found around its margins, from Mauao to Tauranga's CBD and Waikareao Estuary.

The close proximity of the existing Maunganui Roads channel and Stella Passage to Te Paritaha also raises the possibility of potential effects on its geomorphology and ecological health. These are matters of significance in their own right, but they also have a potential bearing on the cultural values attached to Te Paritaha, including in relation to kaimoana. In this regard, I note that Dr Willem De Lange's *Assessment of Effects on Hydrodynamics and Sedimentation* (17th December 2024) describes the significant changes to Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour from 1852 onwards as follows (p. 16)[13]:

> *(a) Reclamation of land associated with wharves and railway lines starting with the Tauranga Railway Wharf in 1924 (the earlier Railway or D- Wharf, was constructed at Mt Maunganui in 1910 and demolished in 1936, without involving reclamation), and then along the Mt Maunganui shoreline starting in 1952;*
>
> *(b) Development of dredged channels for the port starting in 1968;*
>
> *(c) Reclamation of inter-tidal flats at Sulphur Point starting in 1965 and continued during the 1970s leading to the construction of the Sulphur Point Wharf completed in 1992;*
>
> *(d) Reclamation for the causeway of the Tauranga Harbour Crossing in the 1980s;*
>
> *(e) Development of the Tauranga Bridge Marina in the 1990s; and*
>
> *(f) Extension of the Sulphur Point Wharf to provide and additional berth and accommodate larger container vessels (ongoing).*

Contextualised by these changes, modelling associated with the Port's capital dredging in 2015-16 predicted that it would generate (p. 19 of Dr de Lange's report):

> *…. negligible impacts (predominantly a small change in the timing of high and low tide of the order of a few minutes depending on wind direction) of capital dredging of Stella Passage beyond the boundaries of Stella Passage and the northern channel of Waipu Bay. These predictions were confirmed by observations following the completion of dredging (Trividic, 2017)……*

At p. 26 of Dr de Lange's report, addressing the dispersal of dredged material and plumes, it is further stated that modelling has shown that:

> *….. the sediment plumes would be largely confined to the Stella Passage and Maunganui Roads shipping channels, and no sediment would be deposited on Te Paritaha or in Waipu Bay (Whareroa Marae foreshore)……*

[13] *Port of Tauranga Stella Passage Development - Assessment of Effects on Hydrodynamics and Sedimentation*, Dr Willem de Lange (2024)

These, together with other findings, have led Dr de Lange to conclude as follows in relation to the hydrodynamic and sedimentation effects of proposed Stages 1 and 2 (pp. 38 and 39):

- *For the excavation phase, the effects on sedimentation and turbidity are dependent on the characteristics of the TSHD used and the specific geological units encountered. Based on previous capital dredging programmes and numerical modelling, any effects due to these factors will be less than minor.*
- *For the reclamations, there will be slight differences depending on the scale of the reclamation and the sources of the sediment used for each reclamation. Since the reclamation sediment plumes are smaller scale than the TSHD plumes, the differences are expected to be less than minor.*
- *For the post-dredging recovery phase, beyond the immediate environs of Stella Passage, the impacts are negligible to undetectable. Within Stella Passage, Stage 1 will predominantly affect flows along the western side of the southern end of the channel, while Stage 2 will affect flows across the whole width of the southern end. In the central section of the channel, Stage 1 is likely to have the largest impact on flows through the modification of the ebb tide eddy. This will be modified further by the Mount Maunganui Wharf extension. ….. Overall, the predicted hydrodynamic changes are not significant.*
- *Some areas within Te Awanui have previously been identified as specific areas of concern, and these were assessed individually:*
    - *Te Paritaha – the proposed dredging in southern Stella Passage will have no detectable effect on tidal currents over the ebb shield, and, hence will not affect the available tidal window for harvesting kai moana. Sedimentation and turbidity from dredging plumes will also not be detectable on Te Paritaha.*
    - *Panepane – the proposed dredging in southern Stella Passage will have no effect on tidal currents or wave action in the vicinity of Panepane and, therefore, will no contribute to the dynamic changes of the point.*
    - *Tauranga Bridge Marina entrance – none of the numerical models show a detectable change in tidal velocities near the entrance to the Bridge Marina. …….. Models that only simulated the Stella Passage dredging showed no changes in tidal velocities around the Harbour Bridge.*
    - *Whareroa Marae – the proposed dredging in southern Stella Passage will have no detectable effect on tidal currents, sedimentation or turbidity for the Whareroa Marae foreshore. Therefore, there will not be an effect on the erosion of the shoreline, which has been identified as linked to the causeway for the Harbour Bridge. The dredging will not change existing or future mean and extreme sea levels at Whareroa Marae.*
    - *Katikati Basin – the proposed dredging in southern Stella Passage will have no effect on the Katikati Basin and locations within it …….*
    - *Opopoti Marae, Maungatapu Peninsula, Motuhoa Island, and Matakana Point - the proposed dredging in southern Stella Passage will have no effect on tidal currents, sedimentation, shoreline erosion, and mean or extreme sea levels at these locations. …….*

From a landscape standpoint, these findings imply that even though the proposed reclamations and dredging (noting the temporary nature of these activities) would be physically significant, they would have a quite limited impact on the bathymetry of Stella Passage and the wider harbour, or the tidal flows through both. Both Panepane and Te Paritaha would be scarcely affected by the dredging and related plumes. Consequently, even though the margins of Stella Passage would be realigned and further modified, the more qualitative components and values of Stella Passage and its harbour setting would remain much as at present once the capital works are completed.

7.3 Marine Ecological Effects

Dr Sharon de Luca's report – *Assessment of Effects on Marine Ecological Values* (February 2025) – focuses more directly on the ecology of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, and the effects of proposed Stages 1 and 2 on it. More specifically, it explores the potential ecological effects that the project would have, arising from matters including (*Executive Summary*)[14]:

- coastal processes;
- The harbour's total suspended sediment (including resuspended contaminated sediment) during dredging, reclamation and the installation of permanent structures;
- The loss of benthic habitat due to reclamation and permanent occupation;
- The mortality and disturbance of benthic invertebrates within the areas of reclamation, permanent occupation and dredging;
- The shading of the pelagic CMA by wharf structures; and
- Underwater noise and vibration during piling activities and dredging operations.

At Section 4.2 of her report, Dr de Luca describes the 'benthic soft shore community' of Stella Passage as follows:

> *Part of the Stella Passage …… has previously been dredged to accommodate ships at Sulphur Point and regularly receives maintenance dredging. The benthic marine communities within the dredged area are in a cyclic pattern of recovery, continually reset due to primarily maintenance dredging (Grace, 2010).*
>
> *Leonard et al. (2020) stated that the marine species diversity and abundance is characteristic of New Zealand port and harbour organisms and consistent with a temperate New Zealand east coast harbour environment. The marine species assemblages are relatively stable over time despite a number of capital dredging campaigns in the past 10-15 years (Leonard et al. 2020).*
>
> *Battershill (2022) describes the soft sediment subtidal assemblages to be expected of a healthy harbour environment. Given the historic and proposed dredging, I assess the ecological values of the soft sediment habitats to be Moderate, as they are in a state of continually flux / natural recovery.*

Dr de Luca describes Stella Passage's hard shore habitats and pile structures, as follows (Section 4.3):

> *Battershill (2022) describes the existing wharf piles in the Stella Passage as having a rich diversity of encrusting organisms (especially sponges and ascidians) that are "representative of a vibrant, healthy estuarine/harbour habitat". My assessment of the hard substrate / wharf pile communities is that the ecological values are Moderate …….*

Turning to the adjoining marine environment of Te Paritaha, Section 4.6 of Dr de Luca's report focuses on the bank's kaimoana values and, in particular the presence of pipi across it. Key findings by Ross and Culliford (2018) and Boffa Miskell Ltd (2022, 2023 and 2024) are summarised as follows:

> *Data on the abundance of subtidal pipi collected by Ross & Culliford (2018) on the north-west edge of Te Paritaha pre and post the 2015 dredging, showed good recovery of pipi at all depths sampled. Pipi numbers quickly returned to pre-dredge levels, although there was some spatial change in pipi location along the edge of the bank……..*

[14] *Assessment of Effects on Marine Ecological Values*, Dr Sharon de Luca, Boffa Miskell Ltd (2024)

BML also carried out subtidal surveys (in conjunction with Toi Ohomai) for pipi along the north-east edge of Te Paritaha in 2022, with transects extending approximately 15m down the main harbour channel (Boffa Miskell 2023e). Transect locations and lengths were the same as that in Ross & Culliford (2018). Subtidal pipi abundances varied between and within transects, with the highest number of individuals totalling 274 across forty cores along transect B, and the lowest number of individuals recorded along transect A (2 individuals across forty cores). Densities of pipi varied with depth, with higher densities at shallower depths. The average size of pipi was approximately 50 mm, regardless of depth.

Further surveys carried out in 2023 and 2024 (Boffa Miskell 2024a,b,c) confirmed the patterns observed in 2022, with the intertidal area of Te Paritaha dominated by recruit and juvenile pipi, while larger adult individuals were mostly confined to the subtidal habitat.

Turning to that part of Waipu Bay immediately offshore of Whareroa Marae, Section 4.7 of Dr de Luca's report also observes as follows in relation to kaimoana:

Iwi have expressed concern over the reduction in average size of tuangi (the cockle Austrovenus stutchburyi) adjacent to the Whareroa marae. The size/frequency of tuangi at Whareroa Marae is consistent with other regions within Tauranga Moana. As with all shellfish populations, there are times when juvenile sizes dominate the size frequency due to natural recruitment and growth of shellfish…….

Leonard et al., (2020) surveyed tuangi adjacent to Whareroa Marae (n=30). Cockles near Whareroa Boat ramp were abundant (>90 m2), with maximum shell length 28 mm, and an average shell length of 18.3 mm. In comparison, cockles were of a smaller average size at sites at Matapihi and Te Puna estuaries (Leonard et al., 2020).

Addressing fish species within and near the Port, Dr de Luca concludes that (Section 4.9):

The Port area consistently supported species diversity and significant populations of adult fish, particularly kahawai. Species detected in 2019 included eagle ray, snapper, trevally, kingfish, gurnard, kahawai, parore, and spotty (Leonard et al., 2020).

In summary, these observations are indicative of a consistent and diverse fish population in Te Awanui, with the port area supporting adult fish populations. Recreational fishing is popular, and shark populations suggest a stable pelagic food web (Kellett, 2021).

…….. Port operations and dredging activity do not appear to influence fish abundance (Battershill, 2022a). In his summation of evidence for the Stella Passage POTL project, Battershill (2022a) states that the active port area supports suitable habitats for a range of fish species, including recreational target species.

In addition to these assessments, Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's water quality is described as being (Section 4.11) "*in moderate condition*", with a moderate level of nutrient enrichment, while heavy metal contamination of Stella Passage is described as being 'low', although slightly elevated levels of copper were detected at a site near Butters Landing and south of the Tauranga Harbour Marina – probably due to the use of antifouling.

Focusing on the effects of the project, Dr de Luca states at Section 7.1.3 that:

We conservatively assume that the entire benthic community (invertebrates and macroalgae) will perish within the proposed dredge sites, the areas of reclamation and areas of permanent occupation (e.g. piles and toe for seawalls).

……. In summary benthic invertebrates will perish within 10.55ha (4.65 Ha not previously consented) of dredging, up to 3.58 Ha of reclamation and up to 4.05 Ha of permanent occupation, a total of approximately 16.51 Ha (which comprises 0.5 % of the Southern Te Awanui and 14.7 % of Stella Passage).

Even so, the report then states as follows in the same section:

This assessment considers that the benthic community has been previously disturbed and recovered with natural colonisation, and that these processes will be similar with the proposed dredging. The assessment (at both scales) takes the long-term view (>3 years) that the benthic habitat and communities will naturally be restored by the existing environment. Therefore, the magnitude of effect is negligible, and the level of effects is assessed as ***Low****.*

In a related vein, Dr de Luca concludes (Section 7.1.7) that soft sediment benthic communities will rapidly recover and 'reset' after the proposed dredging and reclamation activities are complete, while effects on filter feeding organisms – including pipis and Tuangi (cockles) – will be 'minor and short term' (Section 7.1.3 and 7.1.7). In addition, any effects in relation to local fish communities will range from 'no obvious effect to temporary displacement' from Stella Passage, largely due to the noise associated with pile driving, which will be temporary and localised (Section 7.1.11).

Related findings, addressing the cumulative effects of stages 1 and 2 of the project, include the following (Section 7.1.12):

- Capital and maintenance dredging operations, together with the plumes associated with both will have a 'minimal and relatively short lived' impact on seabed communities; ie. effects of a low order overall;
- The effects associated with permanent occupation of part of the harbour seabed will be of low order; and
- Any effects derived from overshadowing (by wharves) of more of Stella Passage's sea area will also be of a low order.

The assessment of both past and current ecological conditions, and project effects, reinforces my assessment of Stella Passage as a highly modified part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's coastal environment. It also highlights the limited nature of long-term and permanent effects that past port developments have had on both seabed and fish communities within the harbour. Even sediment discharges associated with past capital and maintenance dredging have had a low level of effect on its marine ecology, while contamination of both the seabed and water column within Stella Passage have also remained of a low order. These findings seem counterintuitive, given the highly developed, active, and largely industrial, nature of the current Passage's margins, but appear to reflect the robustness and adaptability of the marine organisms and fish communities found within Tauranga Harbour.

Concern remains in relation to the gradual 'erosion' of pipi and tuangi species within the wider harbour. Yet, in the latter case, at least, such changes appear to be a response to harvesting pressure and changes to the marine ecology that are not directly linked to the Port. The variability of pipis is the subject of on-going investigations arising from previous Environment Court directions, but even so Dr de Luca concludes that the project will not affect pipi at Te Paritaha.

Overall, therefore, even though both stages would result in significant localised changes to the marine environment of Stella Passage, they would have a minimal impact on its biophysical environment. Such effects would also be minimal in relation to Te Paritaha, at the interface between Stella Passage and the wider Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, together with that part of Waipu Bay near Whareroa Marae.

8. Perceptual /Associative Landscape & Natural Character Effects

8.1 The Assessment of Perceptual and Associative Landscape Effects

This component of the wider assessment of landscape effects has been undertaken in four stages:

1) Identification of those catchments / receiving environments, key viewpoints and related audiences exposed to the proposed port expansion and dredging areas;
2) Evaluation of the landscape values currently associated with the setting around the proposed expansion and dredging sites, as experienced through views towards it;
3) Analysis of the relative visibility and prominence of the various components of the expansion projects (Stage 1 and 2) relative to the various receiving environments and vantage points around it; and
4) Evaluation of the perceived landscape effects that would be generated in relation to those same components, including new berths, shipping, cranes, lighting and dredging operations – taking into account Points 2) and 3) above.

8.2 Receiving Environments and Audiences

As indicated in Sections 2 and 4, the project would occur within the modified coastal margins of Stella Passage. The Passage itself is linear and quite confined, both physically and visually, by the adjoining port and its various associated elements – from ships and cranes to berths, sheds, log stacks, lighting, etc. Many of the elements associated with the project would be difficult to differentiate from those that exist at present. Even so, because of the Port's strategic location at the junction between the urban areas of Tauranga and Mt Maunganui, and its exposure to both adjoining parts of the Harbour and the critical transport link of Te Awanui Drive, key components of both stages would still be exposed to a number of key receiving environments, including:

- Tauranga Harbour Bridge, together with Te Awanui Drive and Hewletts Road;
- Pilot Bay and The Mall reserve;
- Mauao and its public reserve;
- That part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour stretching from the harbour bridge to the harbour entrance of Panepane Point and Mauao (including Stella Passage and the Maunganui Roads);
- Tauranga Bridge Marina;
- Whareroa Marae;
- The margins of Dive Crescent and the coastal esplanade near Tauranga's Coronation Pier; and
- Elevated buildings within the Tauranga and Mt Maunganui CBDs;

In addition, some key components of the project – notably the container cranes and rearranged light standards – would be visible from a much wider range of vantage points scattered throughout Mt Maunganui, Otūmoetai and Tauranga City, although such views would often be fragmented, frequently through and past other urban development. The wide-ranging audiences associated with these 'catchments' and vantage points include:

- The occupants of, and visitors to, Whareroa Marae;
- The regional populace – local motorists, commuters, visitors / tourists, cyclists and pedestrians – who traverse the Tauranga Harbour Bridge and who use Te Awanui Drive as it crosses Whareroa Bridge and approaches the fuel terminal / port entrance at Tasman Quay;
- Users of the Tauranga Bridge Marina;
- Users of the Matakana Ferry service;
- Boaties and users of the Tauranga-Mt Maunganui Ferry service through Stella Passage;
- Pedestrians atop Mauao and traversing its southern flanks;
- Locals and visitors alike using The Mall and its beachfront;
- Harbour users; and
- Those flying in and out of Tauranga Airport.

8.3 Assessment Viewpoints and Criteria – Daytime Effects

Viewpoints:

To assess the effects of the project, a sequence of 'before and after' images have been prepared for three key viewpoints – no's 1-3. These images show the existing port area, then photo images, which show future development accurately aligned in relation to the current shoreline and port features, but without the ships, lighting and other proposed elements having been subject to survey accurate scaling. These photomontages address both Stage 1 and Stage 2 sequentially. It is considered that the images prepared for Viewpoints 1-3 offer a sound basis for comparison of the 'before and after' situations. The effects of the project have also been assessed in relation to another four viewpoints, and the combined viewpoints are located as follows (**Attachments 21A - 28**):

Viewpoint 1. **Whareroa Marae**

Viewpoint 2. **Tauranga Harbour Bridge**

Viewpoint 3. **Te Awanui Drive** (immediately north of the Tauranga Bridge Marina)

Viewpoint 4. **Mauao** (southern peak lookout)

Viewpoint 5. **The Mall** (Mt Maunganui)

Viewpoint 6. **Hewletts Road** (near Tasman Quay)

Viewpoint 7. **Coronation Pier** (Tauranga CBD)

Viewpoint 8. **Tauranga Bridge Marina**

Evaluation Criteria:

In assessing the extent and nature of such effects for each viewpoint, the following checklist of assessment factors / criteria has been employed (and is consistent with *Te Tangi at te Manu*):

A. Existing Values:

1) *Perceived Biophysical Values: derived from landforms, vegetation cover, marine body, human elements: buildings / structures / activities*

2) *Other Experiential Values:*
   - *aesthetic value*
   - *legibility / memorability*
   - *expressiveness*
   - *naturalness / intactness*
   - *ephemeral / transient values*
   - *coherence*
   - *shared and recognised values*
   - *significant cultural locations / sites / associations*
   - *Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's identity and sense of place*

B. Visibility / Prominence:

3) *Relative to the visibility scale described below – influenced by:*
   - *The viewing distance from each viewpoint to the Port expansion areas*
   - *The viewpoint's elevation relative to that of the expansion areas*
   - *The natural orientation of views / outlook from the viewpoint*
   - *Weather / light conditions*

C. Landscape & Natural Character Effects:

4) *Any effects in relation to the port landscape's perceived biophysical characteristics and values: in particular, those related to Stella Passage's level of modification*

5) *Any effects in relation to the port landscape's other experiential and associative values*

Although all the criteria outlined above have been considered in assessing the effects of the project, the descriptive analysis for each viewpoint found in Section 8.4 often abbreviates the process to just focus on those matters of particular relevance to each viewpoint.

Effects Rating Scale:

The effects ratings in relation to each viewpoint are 'scored' in accordance with the following rating scale (Table 2, overleaf), which is aligned with *Te Tangi a te Manu's* 7-point rating scale. To show the correlation between landscape and natural character effects ratings, both sets of ratings are shown in this table.

Table 2. Effects Rating Scale

	Landscape Effects:	*Natural Character Effects:*	*Rating:*	*RMA Effects Rating:*
1	*No change or barely legible change to some landscape elements and character; no change to values*	*No change or barely legible change to some coastal elements; no change to overall naturalness*	*Very Low*	*Less Than Minor*
2	*Limited change to some landscape elements and character; no change to values*	*Limited change to some coastal elements; no change to overall naturalness*	*Low*	*Minor*
3	*Increasingly evident change to some landscape elements and character; limited change to values (naturalness, expressiveness, aesthetic value, etc)*	*Increasingly evident change to coastal elements and patterns; slight reduction in overall naturalness*	*Low - Moderate*	*More Than Minor*
4	*Appreciable change to some landscape elements and character; more obvious impact on some values*	*Appreciable change to some coastal elements and patterns; more apparent change in overall naturalness*	*Moderate*	
5	*Marked change to some landscape elements, character and values*	*Marked change to coastal elements and patterns; evident reduction in overall naturalness*	*Moderate - High*	
6	*Obvious degradation of landscape elements, character and values*	*Obvious degradation of coastal elements and patterns, and overall naturalness*	*High*	*Significant*
7	*Very serious and obvious degradation of elements, character and values*		*Very High*	

8.4 Viewpoint Evaluations

The following tables summarise the assessment of effects for each viewpoint, together with the wider receiving environments found around each of them.

Viewpoint 1. **Whareroa Marae** (Attachments 21A-21G)

Existing Values:

Whareroa Marae sits at the end of Taiaho Place on the northern shoreline of Waipu Bay. Its central ātea is framed by a wharenui and whare kai, to the southeast and northwest, respectively, while fencing and trees on the edge of it help to consolidate a central meeting area that is aligned perpendicular to the beachfront. Although a mixture of young to fully mature pohutukawas sit between the ātea and Waipu Bay, the combination of buildings and fencing reinforce its sense of connection with the open expanse of Waipu Bay. By contrast, the marae's papakainga helps to enclose it to the northwest and north – near Taiaho Place and the Whareroa Boat Ramp and car park – while massed pohutukawas and other vegetation flank its eastern and south-eastern boundaries, near Te Awanui Way.

Between the ātea and the massed planting just described a large, grassed, open space – Whareroa Reserve – dominates the eastern side of the marae, while a smaller open space, that contains two sheds and appears to be used for boat storage, is located in the north-western corner of the marae, next to the boat ramp car park. The marae's broader configuration is captured in the Viewpoint Location Aerial shown after paragraph 39 (above), whereas the following images focus on the centre of Whareroa Marae and its interface with the boat ramp car park:

Figure 15: aerial overview of Whareroa Marae

Figure 16: the entrance to Whareroa Marae's ātea

Figure 17: the north-eastern corner of the marae near the boat ramp car park

Consequently, the marae is effectively subdivided into two broad areas: the more clearly defined and contained area of its ātea, which directly addresses Waipu Bay to the south and southwest, and the combined reserve, papakainga and open space near the boat ramp that have a more diffuse and varied outlook towards Waipu Bay, the boat ramp and Whareroa Bridge, Taiaho Place, and the industrial premises that abut the marae to the north, east and south-east. Those adjoining premises include the prominent Ballance Agri-nutrients plant, which dominates the outlook from the marae to the north and northwest, the margins of Tauranga Airport to the south-east, and Te Awanui Drive combined with the part of the Sulphur Point container terminal across Stella Passage, to the west. In addition, the stacked containers of the CRS Tauranga Container Terminal line the eastern side of the marae, between Taiaho Place and the edge of the airport. These climb above the intervening vegetation near Whareroa Reserve to create a near wall of containers down the eastern side of the marae.

The outlook to these industrial premises and infrastructure, together with the often-heavy traffic on Te Awanui Drive and public activities within the boat ramp car park, creates a sense of containment and intrusion that is significant. In particular, the combination of the Ballance plant, stacked containers within the CRS facility, and adjoining boat ramp car park combine to create a strong feeling of imposition and incursion. Only within the quite confined space of the ātea and immediately adjoining part of Waipu Bay's shoreline is this feeling of significant imposition alleviated to a significant degree.

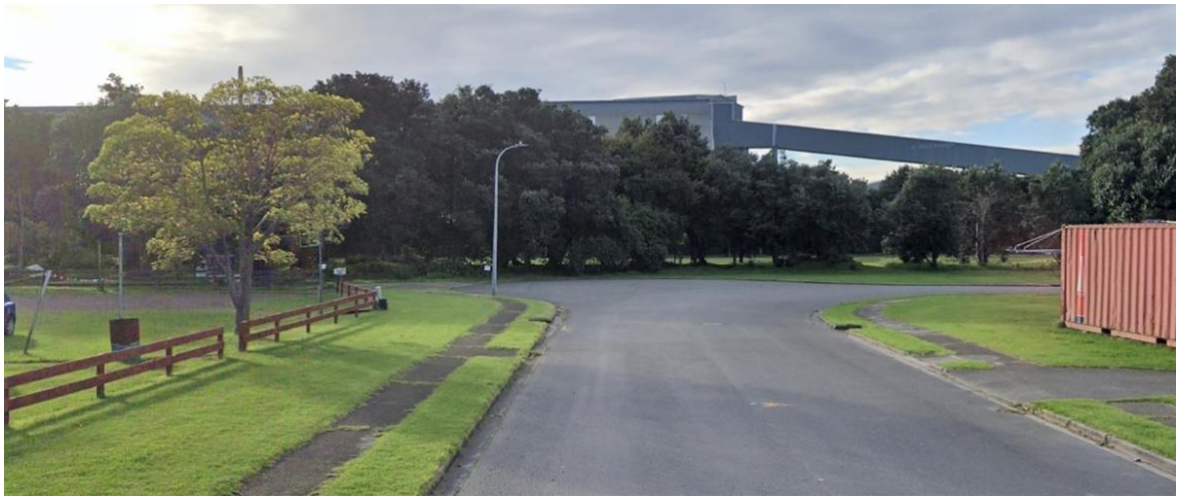


Figure 18:the Ballance plant viewed from near the entrance to Whareroa Marae at the end of Taiaho Place

Figure 19: the CRS Tauranga Container Terminal next to Taiaho Place and Whareroa Reserve.

Figure 20: looking over Whareroa Reserve towards the CRS Tauranga Container Terminal

Again, this contributes to the sense of a marae of two 'halves'. At its centre lies the ātea, wharenui and whare kai, which, as indicated above, remain largely sleeved and buffered from surrounding industry and transport infrastructure by its own buildings and surrounding trees – together with the papakainga, Whareroa Reserve, the open space near the boat ramp, and Waipu Bay itself. Outside this core area, the papakainga, reserve and other marae open spaces – including its shore margins closer to the boat ramp and airport – create an outer 'shell' that interacts more directly with the marae's surrounds.

As a result, awareness of both the Stella Passage and current Port is more apparent near the western edge of the marae and, in particular, near Waipu Bay's coastal edge (represented by the lower panorama shown in **Attachment 21B**). There is less engagement with the Port and its structures closer to the ātea and wharenui, although the existing container cranes frequently overtop the pohutukawas near Te Awanui Drive (visually) in slightly longer distance views, such as those represented by the panorama taken from Viewpoint 1 in **Attachment** 21A.

In terms of the values associated with Whareroa Marae at present, the situation described above creates a clear dichotomy – between the high levels of appeal and meaning associated with its location at the edge of Waipu Bay and the degraded state of the marae's setting. In a positive vein, the marae's occupation of its current location is important in terms of its ancestral Tō Tātou Tūranga (sense of place),

Tō Tātou Tuakiri (identity), and Tō Tātou Taonga (treasure). Furthermore, it remains highly important in terms of Ngāi Te Rangi's exercise of kaitiaki over Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, including mahinga kai. Yet, the marae's containment by existing industrial activities and structures inevitably erodes some of the marae's intrinsic values, especially those related to its place and identity – a key matter that is central to the Overview Report Commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal in 1998[15]. That report highlights Ngāi Te Rangi's concerns over the legislative vesting of control of the harbour to the Tauranga Harbour Board, stating on page 11 that:

> *The large scale development of the international cargo port at Mount Maunganui has severely impacted on the ability of Ngaiterangi to exercise their customary rights over the foreshore. The development of the port was encouraged and facilitated by the Crown. The development was seen as being of national benefit, and the drive to develop the region took precedence over any Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities.*

At page 156, the report further states that cumulative port / harbour developments have destroyed traditional fishing grounds, denied access to fishing grounds, accelerated tribal change (in an adverse fashion) and resulted in a loss of mana for Ngāi Te Rangi. Consequently, development has taken precedence over Maori traditional rights.

The current state of Whareroa Marae's surrounds may well be regarded as a reflection of this strategy.

Visibility / Prominence:

Stage 1

Stage 1's southward extension of berths and shipping, together with new lighting and other structures, would be largely obscured by the pohutakawa trees adjacent to Whareroa Bridge, apart from the upper gantries and some of the booms associated with the new A-frame container cranes (across Stella Passage). The southern ends of larger container ships berthed near the 285m limit to Stage 1, together with their movements in and out of the southern berth would also be visible, albeit more intermittently. Resting crane booms would be more visible than working booms, although they would remain part of the visual backcloth to the pohutukawas, bridge, traffic, causeway, boat ramp and car park that sit much closer to this vantage point.

Stage 2

Very little, if anything, of the Minor Structures and Minor Vessel Berths would be exposed to Viewpoint 3 and Whareroa Marae in conjunction with Stage 2. These structures would remain screened by the pohutukawas and existing industrial development north of Whareroa Bridge, so that the more immediate landscape around it would be little changed when viewed from Viewpoint 1. These structures would have no impact on Whareroa Marae and its Waipu Bay margins.

On the other hand, shipping and container handling within the Sulphur Point area would be more obvious. The total number of container cranes in both stages would rise to four, but the two cranes operating within the Stage 2 section of the Sulphur Point wharves would have noticeably lower profiles. Even so, they would be clearly visible on the far side of Whareroa Bridge, as would larger container ships, both when docked and moving in and out of the southern berths. The new light standards to be

[15] P.11 *Overview Report Prepared for The Waitangi Tribunal about Ngaiterangi & The Crown*, Bassett Kay Research (1998).

added to the Maunganui Berths would, on the other hand, be much less visible, with most screened from view.

Stepping back to locations closer to the marae's wharenui (and further away from Stella Passage, **Attachment 21G**), the fuller sequence of container cranes near Te Awanui Drive will become apparent – visually over-topping the intervening pohutukawas – while shipping near Sulphur Point's southern berths will actually appear to sink down slightly, merging more directly with Whareroa Bridge. Both will remain backed by the container stacks across Sulphur Point, with the Kaimai Range still offering a much more distant 'backcloth' to the Port. In such views, the broader sequence of port structures, particularly its cranes, would be more obvious, albeit still prominent rather than dominant.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

Stage 1

Stage 1 would have a limited impact on Whareroa Marae, its beach and car park margins, with most of the new container berth, cranes and associated operations screened by the intervening pohutukawas and some of the transport infrastructure between Whareroa Bridge and the Ballance plant. The southern end of berthed ships, their movements in and out of the new berths, and the upper infrastructure of two new cranes would be visible to varying degrees (**Attachment 21D**). Even so, most of the view beyond Whareroa Bridge would remain dominated by the existing container terminal and the profile of the Kaimai Range beyond. The automated stacking cranes would also be apparent, but they would be very largely 'absorbed' by the existing terminal and its lines of stacked containers. Consequently, the landscape visible on the far side of Stella Passage would retain its port character and still be largely defined by its industrial-port values.

Stage 2

The proposed changes to the Minor Structures and Minor Vessel Berths area near Butters Landing would have even less effect, as that part of the Port would remain almost entirely screened by the aforementioned pohutukawas and infrastructure. Within Stella Passage, the proposed dredging of the new berth pocket and manoeuvring area would be slightly more visible, but it would be confined to part of the Port's maritime area that is enclosed by Whareroa Bridge on one side and the container terminal on the other. Furthermore, the proposed capital dredging would be a temporary activity. Again, therefore, it would have a limited impact on the character of the coastal area exposed to the marae.

With the development of Stage 2, (**Attachments 21E** and **21F**), the combination of container cranes, shipping, stacked containers, light standards and berths would result in a level of containment that is similar to that of a one or two storey development near the marae's western boundary – lower than the Ballance Agri-nutrients plant and its A-frame (main) building, but much lower than the stacks of containers in the CRS Tauranga yard to the east, and also more permeable and variable than a solid mass of buildings or massed containers to much the same height. The proposed cranes, containers and shipping would still be interposed in front of just over half of the Kaimai Range on a regular basis, while the new cranes' white and orange colouring, together with the coloured hulls and container stacks on ships at the new berths, would draw more attention to the Port and its container berths. Yet, the

existing (110m high) cranes already signal the presence of the Port in views from Whareroa Marae, while the existing container port stacks at Sulphur Point also screen the Kaimai Range on a regular basis. Furthermore, the combination of those stacks and the existing cranes already highlight the fuller extent of the Port on the far side of Stella Passage.

Consequently, the key issues posed by the additional container cranes and shipping revolve around what this additional visual intrusion and encroachment would mean for the marae. From a landscape standpoint, the anticipated changes to Stella Passage and Sulphur Point would be largely incremental – an extension of what exists and is visible at present. Yet, in on-site discussions with Ngāi Te Rangi representatives at Whareroa Marae, concern was voiced about the visibility of ships and cranes as signature features of the Port, as well as their impact on views of the Kaimai Range. In this regard, it is clear that the Stage 2 proposals for Sulphur Point would amplify the presence of the Port and screen out more of the Range -though not all of it – on a regular basis. In turn, the expanded Port would exacerbate the level of enclosure generated by industrial and port elements in relation to Whareroa Marae and the degree of 'offence' associated with the Port's intrusion into, and modification of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour dating back to at least 1969 (with the formation of the Sulphur Point reclamation and the artificial waterway of Stella Passage). This additional intrusion and enclosure would be much more apparent in relation to Stage 2 than Stage 1. Even so:

a) Such effects would be more ground-breaking and significant if there were no container terminal and berths on the far side of Stella Passage at present, but clearly this is not the case.

b) The effects of the existing Ballance Agri-nutrients plant, Te Awanui Drive, the harbour bridge, the adjoining marina, and even the boat ramp and car park, are all acknowledged in the Ngāi Te Rangi Iwi Management Plan. The introduction of additional port berths and structures to this environment would be additive, but not ground-breaking, as the project would concentrate new development in a part of the coast that is already highly modified and specifically identified for future port development in planning instruments. In this regard it is noted that RCEP Policy PZ 5(b) directs the concentration of 'major new structural development in areas already modified, so that development is guided away from other coastal areas of higher natural character, natural landscape, recreational value, and cultural value'.

c) The Port's new berths would be peripheral to the main areas of communal focus within the marae, in particular those associated with its entrance off Taiaho Place, the ātea, wharenui and whare kai. In turn, the central marae, together with the adjoining Whareroa Reserve and even papakainga near Taiaho Place, are more directly and strongly connected with the expansive waters of Waipu Bay than Stella Passage – which is more peripheral.

d) The open space at the western end of the marae, together with the Whareroa Boat Ramp, its car park and the Whareroa Bridge also help to separate the marae from Stella Passage and the project areas, although this buffering is more effective at close range (e.g. Viewpoints 2 and 3), less so in relation to views over greater distance (e.g. Viewpoint 1).

e) As the pohutukawas near Te Awanui Drive and the boat ramp continue to grow they will increasingly screen out the container cranes associated with Stage 1. This future screening would subdivide the Port into two separate halves (much as at present), reducing both its presence and level of effects overall.

While these 'additions' would increase the visual presence of industrial elements and structures generally, and the associated sense of imposition on the marae, this still has to be weighed up against the reality that the Ballance plant and CRS Tauranga container yard sit right on the marae's 'doorstep', whereas the Port is one tier back. Moreover, views towards the Port also encompass the boat ramp and its car park, Whareroa Bridge and Te Awanui Drive, while the marae's core spaces are more directly oriented towards Waipu Bay.

Returning to the Mt Maunganui side of the Port, the Stage 2 proposals for the Minor Structures and Minor Vessel Berths area would again be screened by the intervening pohutukawas at the edge of Te Awanui Drive and that transport corridor.

To summarise, I consider that the project would have some impact on Tō Tātou Tūranga (sense of place), by reinforcing the sense of imposition generated by industrial development – including an expanded port – on Whareroa Marae. Yet, the Port's expansion would have a low level of effect in relation to the marae's character and aesthetic value. Consequently, even though both project stages would inevitably have an impact on views from Whareroa Marae, as well as on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour in a more symbolical vein, the level of overall effect would still be limited by the factors identified above.

On balance, I therefore consider that landscape effects generated by Stage 1 in relation to Whareroa Marae would be of a low order, and those associated with Stage 2 would rise to a moderate level.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

The coastal environment between Whareroa Marae and Stella Passage is highly modified by the combination of the existing industrial and port activities, Te Awanui Drive and Whareroa Bridge, the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, the Tauranga Bridge Marina, the boat ramp and car park next to the marae and even the marae's own grounds, wharenui and papakainga. As a result, it already sits at the highly modified end of the natural character spectrum. Furthermore, the form of the Passage, together with its bathymetry and seabed, have been shaped by human activities (as discussed in Section 5.1, addressing the creation of Sulphur Point).

As such, the proposed Stage 1 expansion would have a very limited and wholly incremental impact on the naturalness of the local coastline, and this would not appreciably change as Stage 2 unfolds. In saying this, it is acknowledged that ships and their movements are a Permitted Activity under the RECP within the Port Zone and the effects generated by both stages would start from a very low natural character base. Recognising this, I consider that the natural character effects would be of a very low order for both stages.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
moderate	low	low	very low
STAGE 2:			
moderate	moderate-high	moderate	very low

Viewpoint 2. **Tauranga Harbour Bridge** (Attachments 22A & 22B)

Existing Values:

The view northwards from the Tauranga Harbour Bridge is presently dominated by four components: the broad, but also physically confined, channel of Stella Passage; the enclosed matrix of boats, masts and piers within the Tauranga Bridge Marina; the container berths, shipping and cranes lining Sulphur Point and the more distant, but nonetheless distinctive, pyramidal form of Mauao rising above the harbour entrance. A scattering of moored yachts and launches spread across the foreground of Stella Passage close to the harbour bridge is also obvious, adding to the patina of structures and vessels both within, and around, the waterway. Indeed, while the central sea channel and a more distant Mauao are natural 'remnants' of considerable note, overwhelming impressions are of a part of the coastal environment that is fundamentally artificial and very largely the result of human action: from the wharves and rock armour lining its margins to the cranes, containers, masts, storage tanks and industrial sheds that traverse its skyline. The breakwaters at the edge of the marina, together with Matakana Island Ferry terminal and jetty, and moored vessels directly adjacent to the harbour bridge, add to such impressions in the process of travelling over it.

Although Mauao inevitably draws a significant amount of attention, and the serrated line of Norfolk Island Pines marching across part of the Pilot Bay skyline add a somewhat different dimension to views from this quarter, impressions remain of a highly developed and modified waterway. This distinctive, port / maritime quality is exacerbated by the way in which both ships and cranes sit 'in front of' Mauao, while a broader expanse of other port and industrial structures encloses both sides of Stella Passage. Together with the movement of container cranes, ships, and smaller vessels up and down the harbour channel, this lends it the strong sense of being dynamic and ever changing. These qualities, combined with the intensity of the visual interaction between the marina, adjoining port facilities and industrial installations, also set the waterway apart from every other part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and its coastal margins. Nowhere else is the coastline of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and its margins so clearly shaped, and visually dominated, by human intervention and activity, both past and present.

At the same time, the elevated nature of views from this viewpoint (as well as all others on the harbour bridge) creates both a strong feeling of 'spectacle': of a window being opened up to part of Tauranga's maritime environment that is otherwise largely closed off, and screened, by the existing container terminal and surrounding industry – both at Sulphur Point and around Totara Street. Consequently, views from the bridge are quite different from those experienced from The Mall, Mauao, the main Mt Maunganui beachfront or even near Tauranga's Dive Crescent and Coronation Pier – all of which celebrate a sense of connection with the more natural form, water areas, margins and surf break of the CMA. Instead, views from the harbour bridge express human manipulation and large-scale modification of the CMA. The dynamic qualities experienced from the bridge are not those associated with nature, they are defined by on-going development and use of a strategic part of the harbour.

Consequently, as indicated in Section 5, Stella Passage lies at the highly modified end of the landscape and natural character spectrums. This is why it is – correctly in my assessment – excluded from the ONC and ONFL layers otherwise applied to most of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour.

Visibility / Prominence:

Attachments 22A and **22B** show Viewpoint 2 incorporating the sequential expansion of the container terminal at Sulphur Point, together with more limited development opposite, near Whareroa Bridge, Butters Landing and the current fuel jetty. The southward extension of the current container terminal and associated berthage areas, would be more obvious in this regard, especially with Stage 2, as expansion of the Sulphur Point berths would bring container vessels closer to the harbour bridge. This includes larger container ships that have greater girth, a more elevated superstructure and larger container stacks. The A-frame container cranes of Stage 1 would remain quite distant, but Stage 2's articulated boom cranes would move appreciably closer to this viewpoint.

Conversely, development within the Minor Structures and Minor Vessel Berths area near Berth 16, on the opposite side of the harbour channel, would be much more subtle and recessive. Visually framed by the Tauranga Bridge Marina, the Port's tank farm, and its existing log carrier and fuel berths, the changes proposed around Butters Landing would be difficult to clearly discern from this vantage, even moreso from moving vehicles.

Between these two areas of portside activity, the proposed Stage 1 and Stage 2 dredging would be visible, although it would occur within a body of water that is already both flanked by, and dotted with, a wide array of other vessels. It would also be quite distant – mainly occurring on the far side of the Tauranga Harbour Marina . Finally, even though this vantage point is quite elevated, the low angle of viewing from it would combine with reflections off the sea's surface to screen most, if not all, plumes generated by a suction dredge operating in Stella Passage.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

Neither the Stage 1 nor Stage 2 developments both sides of Stella Passage would change the essential nature of the waterway or its margins. Its 'port' character would be accentuated, most notably because of the closer proximity of container ships and cranes – initially (Stage 1) leading towards the current 'sand pile', then (Stage 2) terminating at the northern edge of the sand pile. Less obvious would be changes to the edge of the channel immediately south of the new container berths, while the proposed changes to the ferry ramp, jetties and minor vessels berthage at Butters Landing would be impossible to clearly see – mostly masked by the Tauranga Bridge Marina and the 'forest' of yacht masts rising above it.

The two-stage extension of the container terminal – including its berths, new container cranes, new lighting, automated stacking cranes, and additional ships – will strengthen the maritime nature of Stella Passage, making its connection with the Port that much clearer and more visually obvious, perhaps even more coherent. The reduction in open space either side of its waterway would actually 'tighten up' the visual focus on the channel's water area and axis, with less of that space 'bleeding out' into the adjoining container terminal and industrial areas abutting the Port. This implies that the proposed changes might conceivably enhance Stella Passage's linear form and the focus on its water area – as a comparison of **Attachments 22A** and **22B** suggests – thus heightening its contrast with the much more open sea and estuarine areas that otherwise prevail around Tauranga and Mt Maunganui. Importantly, therefore,

the proposed changes to the landscape of Stella Passage would be more likely to reinforce its identity and sense of place, than to undermine or erode those qualities.

The key 'negatives' associated with this transition would be further masking of Mauao's western slopes, when viewed from the eastern end of the harbour bridge (less so, when looking from its Sulphur Point end) and a slight increase in the sense of functionality and utility associated with the harbour channel. In addition, a dredge would be visible within Stella Passage's main navigation area until the proposed capital dredging is completed, then when additional maintenance dredging is required. Yet, ship movements, together with those of vessels in and out of Waipu Bay, and the Tauranga Harbour Marina , already occur within the channel – as too does current maintenance dredging – while the near side of the channel is also dotted with moored yachts and launches. Again, the 'working' maritime nature of this environment is starkly apparent, so that the proposed Stage 1 and Stage 2 dredging would result in little modification of its character and values. As a result, its effects would be largely incremental and relatively subtle.

Overall, I consider that the proposed changes would generate a low level of landscape effect in relation to Viewpoint 2 and nearby parts of the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, with these ratings equally applicable to both Stages 1 and 2.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

Under Stages 1 and 2, the western side of Stella Passage would become sequentially more hard-edged than at present, with its current mixture of quite 'loose' gravel and sand lined, banks, and retaining, replaced by rock armouring and new, piled berths. On the other hand, the alignment and extent of the wharf frontages both sides of Stella Passage would appear little different from at present, with the introduction of shipping to the Passage's southern reaches probably the most obvious sign of real change within the local coastal environment. Even so, the expanded area of shipping, crane movements, dredging, and other activities would primarily affect parts of the harbour channel that are already lined by the container terminal, jetties, roading, boat moorings, the Tauranga Bridge Marina, etc. The new berthage areas would merge, relatively seamlessly, with the current alignment of Berths 7-11 at Sulphur Point, together with Butters Landing and Berth 16 on the Mt Maunganui Wharf, while the proposed hard standing, lights and automated stacking activities back from the edges of Stella Passage would all merge with existing parts of the Port that accommodate these structures and activities at present.

As a result, changes to the perceived waterway channel, its vegetation cover and extent, its natural processes (including tidal fluctuations and wave fetch), and its land uses and activities would be quite limited. On balance, I therefore consider that the natural character effects associated with the proposed port expansion – for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 – will be of a Very Low order.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
moderate-high	moderate-high	low	very low
STAGE 2:			
moderate-high	moderate-high	low	very low

Viewpoint 3. **Te Awanui Drive** (Attachments 23A & 23B)

Existing Values:

As motorists, cyclists and pedestrians pass the Tauranga Bridge Marina and traverse the second, much smaller inlet to Waipu Bay via Te Awanui Drive near the Ballance site and Whareroa Marae, a view fleetingly opens up to both the port area south of Berth 16 and – more obliquely – the area on the far side of Stella Passage, near Berth 25. Whereas Viewpoint 2 casts more of a 'spotlight' on the project near Sulphur Point and its container terminal, Viewpoint 3 focuses more directly on the area south of Butters Landing that is occupied by a port storage compound and workshop, small boat berths and offices.

Apart from the distinctive conical profile of Mauao, most of the present-day views from this quarter are totally dominated by the infrastructure of Te Awanui Drive itself, including its multiple bridge railings and lights, the adjoining port sheds and storage area, and the northern end of the Tauranga Bridge Marina. Sulphur Point and its existing berths are also clearly apparent across the main body of Stella Passage, while the 'A Frame' profile of the main factory within the Ballance works rises above a line of pohutukawas down the eastern side of Te Awanui Drive.

Whereas Viewpoint 2 benefits from its elevated overview of Stella Passage and the current port area, this viewpoint reveals more of the layers of development around the waterway at close hand. Neither Mauao nor the strip of pohutukawa down the side of the road corridor are strong enough to alleviate the feeling of being within a robust, but also largely utilitarian, port-industrial area. This sense of functionality is accentuated by the typically high, to very high, volumes of traffic that typically use the road corridor during daylight and evening hours, while the adjoining marina's hard standing and boat repair facilities are enclosed by high screens just before this viewpoint and a sequence of sheds, stored port equipment, vehicles, security fencing, log stacks and oil storage tanks emerges just past it on Te Awanui Drive. In addition, views across the harbour – south of Berths 23-25 – are flat and devoid of any real interest, while Stella Passage itself is defined by the structural elements around it rather than any natural features or qualities of note. These factors further compound the predominantly industrial aesthetic associated with this part of the 'harbour drive'.

As a result, views from this viewpoint and nearby parts of Te Awanui Drive have quite limited value at present, other than to affirm a strong sense of connection with the current port and its industrial hinterland.

Visibility / Prominence:

Nothing would change on the near (Mt Maunganui) side of the harbour with proposed Stage 1, while Stage 2 would see new blue penguin roosts established at the near edge of the Port's storage area, together with a ramp to them, but the proposed bunker jetty hidden by the current reclamation and sheds on top of it. Even in the long term, very little change would be apparent within this area and the current viewshaft to Mauao from Whareroa Bridge would remain intact.

Across Stella Passage, however, more and closer container shipping would be clearly apparent, while the two new A-frame Cranes within Stage 1, then two additional Articulated Boom Cranes proposed under Stage 2, would rise beyond them. Automated Stacker Cranes would also emerge within the existing container terminal, but would have much less visual presence. The proposed piling and berths in that same area would also be visible when ships are not present but, by and large, it would meld with the hard standing and current edge of the container terminal. The majority of proposed reclamation would also be 'lost' against the backdrop of that existing terminal. Both stages of development at Sulphur Point would have much the same degree of prominence, individually, when viewed from this vantage point, but the combined stages would cumulatively traverse much more of Stella Passage when viewed from this vantage point.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

As for Viewpoint 2, the Stage 1 and 2 developments would affect a highly modified part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's environment that is solidly flanked by existing port, transport infrastructure and industrial activities. It comprises a far from natural or highly valued landscape – with the exception of fleeting views to Mauao. The reclamation and structures associated with both stages would accentuate the established qualities of a coastal area that is already notable for its proliferation of port / industrial buildings, structures and vessels. As such, it is possible that the proposed developments next to Sulphur Point might well increase the dynamic qualities of this experience by bringing motorists, cyclists and pedestrians closer to the heart of the Port. There would be a much more tangible sense of connection with the loading and unloading of ships, and port activity in general. The maritime nature of the landscape around Te Awanui Drive would be enhanced and the water area of Stella Passage would be more strongly framed – increasing the sense of focus on it. As a result, Stages 1 and 2 could conceivably reinforce, rather than alter and diminish, the identity of the landscape around Te Awanui Drive and Stella Passage.

In this regard, it is important to recognise the very hard edged, quite utilitarian, context for such views, both in the more immediate vicinity of Te Awanui Drive and in looking across Stella Passage towards Sulphur Point. Having descended from the harbour bridge and approaching the industrial area around Hewletts Road, there is very much the feeling of being within a transport conduit in which attention is largely focused on the carriageway and other vehicles. Consequently, even though the Stage 1 extension of the current container berths would undoubtedly change the composition and apparent extent of the main body of the Port that is exposed to Te Awanui Drive – even moreso the combination of both stages – this transition would not appear out of context or overly negative. As indicated above, they might in fact enhance it to some degree.

As such, I consider that both stages of the project would have a very low level of adverse effect on the landscape experienced from Viewpoint 3 (and nearby parts of Te Awanui Drive), notwithstanding its close proximity to both the Mt Maunganui and Sulphur Point Wharves.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

Expansion of the wharves down Sulphur Point would result in some modification of the existing port edge on the western side of Stella Passage that is reasonably obvious, but much less meaningful in

terms of the inherent naturalness of the waterway and its margins. Stages 1 and 2 would not appreciably affect the 'natural' landform or vegetation patterns associated with either side of the channel, nor would it alter the state of natural processes within its margins. The current range of maritime and port-related activities within those same margins would clearly intensify and Stella Passage's relative lack of naturalness would be affirmed, but the impact on its natural character would be quite limited.

As a result, the natural character effects associated with both stages of port expansion are expected to be of a very low order.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
low	moderate-high	very low	very low
STAGE 2:			
low	moderate-high	Very low	very low

Viewpoint 4. **Mauao** (Attachments 24A & 24B)

Existing Values:

The southern edge of Mauao's main peak offers quite expansive views out over the inshore reaches of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, together with the Waikareao Estuary, Waipu Bay and even Te Tahuna o Rangataua. These water areas are framed by Otūmoetai, Sulphur Point, the Tauranga CBD, the Matapihi Peninsula and much of Mt Maunganui. These urban areas are backed by a patchwork of farmland, forest blocks and native bush remnants south of Welcome Bay, while the open space of Tauranga Airport is a distinctive feature at the edge of Waipu Bay – providing a foil to Tauranga's CBD and the swathe of industrial development that wraps around the freighters, hard standing, sheds and cranes of the Port or Tauranga. Together with the Tauranga Marina, the Port dominates middle distance views directly across the harbour to the south, with its matrix of linear berths, log handling areas, container terminal and container cranes crowding in on the freighters at its edge. Even so, it is the 'jumble' of large industrial buildings around Totara Street – extending eastwards – as well as lining Keith Allen Drive that are the largest 'building blocks' within the panoramic views from this vantage point. Even the massing of buildings within Tauranga's CBD is very much subsidiary, visually, to this broad swathe of industrial development and premises spread across the coastal hinterlands of Sulphur Point and much of Mt Maunganui. Consequently, even though the harbour is the one feature that truly dominates and also unifies views from this elevated quarter, it contrasts very markedly with a highly intensive layering of man-made structures and activities along and behind its nearest margins. As indicated above in relation to the current Port, these coastal edges are largely artificial, with natural remnants and elements (other than the harbour itself) more evident around Waipu Bay and Waikareao Estuary, which form part of the more distant backdrop that frames the main body of the harbour and both cities.

Notwithstanding the content of such views, they remain spectacular because their sheer openness and panoramic nature, while the elevation of Mauao's crest offers a unique overview of both Tauranga and Mt Maunganui. These complement the views available from the more heavily used, lookout next to Mauao's trig point, which focus on much of the rest of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour to the west and north – towards Omokoroa and over Matakana Island – as well as out over Mt Maunganui's main surf beach and break to the broad expanse of the Pacific Ocean. In effect, Viewpoint 3 brings more sharply into focus the interplay between the harbour and those parts of Tauranga City that flank it, including suburban and peri-urban areas that extend well beyond the area framing Stella Passage. As such, the various views available from the top of Mauao are important, irrespective of their detail and content, and Viewpoint 3 is no less significant than other vantage points on the maunga, even though many of the elements revealed in views from it are clearly reflective of a wide range of port-related and industrial activities.

Visibility / Prominence:

Both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 container berths proposed by the PoTL down the edge of Sulphur Point would merge seamlessly with the current container terminal and Berths 23-25. Similarly, the southward movement of cranes, towards the harbour bridge, and the related movement of container ships in that same direction, might be discernible via direct comparison using 'before and after' images, but it would

be difficult for most viewers to otherwise distinguish the current container berths and cranes from those proposed.

The much more limited modifications and changes proposed around Butters Landing – including the creation of a bunker jetty – would be largely 'lost' amid the existing berths, jetties, ferry ramp and infrastructure of the southern Mt Maunganui Wharf. These would remain largely aligned with current Berths 7-11 and 16, so that it would be extremely difficult to differentiate between the 'old' and 'new' parts of the Port within and around Stella Passage.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

Both the Stage 1 and 2 expansion proposals would consolidate a range of structures, vessels and activities within part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour that is already strongly shaped and defined by such elements. The most obvious change to current views would be the cumulative encroachment of the four new container cranes on the arcing profile of the harbour bridge, but given the extent and complexity of the wider panorama exposed to this viewpoint, these additions, and related changes to the harbour landscape, would remain quite limited. It would not alter the basic composition, or values, of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, while the interplay between more cultural and more natural elements within such views would be little altered. Aesthetically too, the outlook from Viewpoint 4 would continue to be much the same as at present, with the harbour (including its bays and estuaries) still a defining feature of the maritime landscape in the foreground and middle distance of views from Mauao's crest.

Again, therefore, the project would tend to affirm the identity of Stella Passage and its margins – relative to the wider landscape of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and Tauranga City – but would not appreciably alter its character or sense of place. As a result, the modifications associated with both Stage 1 and Stage 2 would be visually benign and I consider that that they will have a very low level of landscape effect.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

The new berths and reclamations proposed would barely register from this viewpoint in the context of the existing port, while the new container cranes would affirm a pattern of development and interplay between activities that is well established at the harbour's edge. Furthermore, any visual change noticeable at that interface would occur within part of the harbour that is notable for its highly developed and modified state. Consequently, the current proposals would not appreciably affect the landforms, water bodies, vegetation patterns, distribution of activities, or overall degree of naturalness apparent from this viewpoint. As such, I consider that the natural character effects associated with both stages of the project will be of a very low order overall.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
high	very low	very low	very low
STAGE 2:			
high	very low	very low	very low

Viewpoint 5. **The Mall, Pilot Bay** (Attachment 25)

Existing Values:

Viewpoint 5 is located within the beach reserve off The Mall, near Mt Maunganui's CBD. It offers expansive views of Tauranga's inshore harbour – stretching from Mauao to the eastern side of the Port and the distant Papamoa Hills in the general direction of Te Puke. Yet, unlike views from high up on Mauao, this vantage point sits near sea level, so that the panorama stretching out before The Mall is largely confined to the harbour and visible shoreline traversing (from west to east) Omokoroa through to suburban Otūmoetai, then the Tauranga Bride Marina and Sulphur Point, and finally the outer reaches of Stella Passage. This contrasts with a foreground that is dominated, both visually and physically, by the harbour's littoral margins and a sandy beach, then the esplanade reserve's mown swathe of kikuyu, a line of Norfolk Island pines and the boardwalk that runs next to **Attachment 25**.

There is also a very marked contrast between the open waters of the harbour and the much more confined space of Stella Passage, flanked by the outer berthage areas, container terminal and freight facilities of the current Port. Ships and light towers line both sides of the Passage, while cranes swing and move on both sides of the channel. The Tauranga Bridge Marina at the entrance to the Waikareao Estuary reinforces this maritime theme, but is much more low-key and visually subdued, while the 'softer', more vegetated, matrix of residential development behind Otūmoetai shoreline provides transition into the pockets of rural-residential development, pasture, orchards and shelterbelts stretching up the coast to Omokoroa. The arcing profile of the harbour bridge is also apparent at the 'head' of Stella Passage. Much closer to this vantage point, Berths 1-6, POTL's tug berth and the adjacent berths that cater to cruise liners – especially over the summer months – are clearly apparent at the end of The Mall and its beachfront.

This outlook, particularly on a fine day, is strikingly pleasant and strongly emblematic of Mt Maunganui's close associations with the neighbouring harbour. In addition, it offers a more passive recreational alternative to the surf beaches that line the outside of the peninsula. Even so, it also encapsulates many of the elements now commonly associated with Tauranga's and Mt Maunganui's maritime connections, and the interplay of man-made structures and activities with the harbour – none more so than the highly visible Port area. As a result, the landscape captured in views from this quarter is appealing, attractive and distinctive, but it is far from pristine or natural. There remains a sense of separation from the Port, but its close proximity still means that it leaves an indelible imprint on impressions of the harbour from The Mall and its adjoining beachfront reserve.

Visibility / Prominence:

The proposed wharf extensions, reclamations, cranes and related shipping activity would also focus on the 'far end' of Stella Passage. As a result, there would be very incremental, extremely small scale, changes to the line of shipping and berths down the eastern side of the waterway – beyond the current line of container berths at Berths 7-11 – while the new wharves, reclamation, shipping and cranes on and next to Sulphur Point would be visually absorbed by the structures and vessels that already line the western side of Stella Passage. Dredging within the channel would also be so distant and visually recessive that it would be barely discernible from this viewpoint.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

Stages 1 and 2 of the project would be almost indistinguishable from the plethora of current Port structures and activities, most of which are already much closer to Pilot Bay. There would be no appreciable change to the composition and character of either the Mt Maunganui and Sulphur Point Wharves or Stella Passage – other than, perhaps, occasional awareness of slightly more cranes at the far end of the container berths and terminal. If anything, the changes would affirm the maritime content and character of those parts of the coastal landscape already dominated and/or heavily influenced by Port and other maritime activities. Regardless, the core identity of the wider Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour landscape would be unaffected by the proposed developments.

As a result, the perceived landscape effects for this viewpoint would be of a very low order for both stages of the project.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

The expanded wharves, reclamations, operational areas / structures and vessels anticipated for Stella Passage would, as indicated above, be extremely difficult to distinguish from the existing Port environment and coastal margins. Indeed, any changes that might be faintly visible in relation to Stella Passage's landforms, natural processes and land uses / activities would scarcely register at all within its existing, highly modified, coastal environment. Consequently, any effects in relation to its natural character values would be of a very low order.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
moderate-high	very low	very low	very low
STAGE 2:			
moderate-high	very low	very low	very low

Viewpoint 6. **Hewletts Road** (Attachment 26)

Existing Values:

The western end of Hewletts Road – passing both Tasman Quay, with its profusion of fuel storage tanks and silos on one side of the road, and the Ballance fertiliser works on the other – is a profoundly hard-edged environment, made even more utilitarian by security fencing and walling flanking the four lanes of its heavily trafficked roadway. This corridor is softened very slightly by some pohutukawas and Norfolk Island pines, together with a bed of coastal shrubs at the sharp bend that marks the approach to the both the harbour bridge and adjoining marina. Yet, it remains fundamentally shaped by the heavy industrial environment that it passes through. Moreover, because the road ramps up on its approach to the bend just mentioned, those looking down the road axis tend to visually 'overshoot' Stella Passage, with their attention fleetingly directed towards the containers on the far side of the channel. Otherwise, most attention is directed towards the adjoining tanks and other industrial elements, or the looming bend and surrounding traffic.

As a result, this viewpoint has little aesthetic appeal or intrinsic value, other than offering a strong degree of contrast to the expansive views that open up once on the harbour bridge (Viewpoint 2).

Visibility / Prominence:

Views from the roadway approaching Stella Passage would, at times, reveal container ships and cranes on the far side of Stella Passage – south of Berths 23-25. Yet, such exposure would typically occur in the context of the road environment described above and, in most cases, would be from vehicles travelling at 70kmh through a sharp, 90-degree bend. As a result, any visual connection with the various vessels, cranes and other structures associated with the proposed berths and reclamation would be fleeting at most. Furthermore, most of this contact would be focused on the Stage 1 development at Sulphur Point: the Stage 2 berthage area would only emerge in the course of passing through the 90-degree bend just described and travelling along Te Awanui Drive.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

In addition, the environment framing such interaction would be, as now, dominated by a layering of industrial, then port, structures and facilities. At worst, therefore, the proposed Stage 1 dredging, shipping and cranes (both for the unloading of container vessels and automated stacking), would simply affirm the existing qualities of this port / industrial area, without either enhancing or further degrading its aesthetic qualities and essential character.

More likely, the activity associated with container ships 'almost within touching distance' beyond the end of Hewletts Road might well add some interest and a degree of variety to an environment that is scarcely redolent of such qualities at present. As for Viewpoint 3 (Te Awanui Drive), such engagement could well enhance the more dynamic qualities of the Port environment and create a sense of closer proximity to what is happening within it. Overall, though, it seems more than likely that such changes would have little impact on the core character of the area around Hewletts Road then Te Awanui Drive. On the basis of this analysis, I consider that Stages 1 and 2 would – both individually and cumulatively – have a very low level of impact on the landscape character and values of Viewpoint Hewletts Road.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

Similarly, Hewletts Road offers a very limited degree of connection with Stella Passage at present, and the fleeting views that are available towards the waterway are almost entirely through the lens of an extremely modified, industrial environment. As a result, I consider that the Stage 1 and 2 expansion proposals would have a very low level of effect in relation to the natural character values of Stella Passage.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
very low	very low	very low	very low
STAGE 2:			
very low	low	very low	very low

Viewpoint 7. **Coronation Pier** (Attachment 27)

Existing Values:

The views from Tauranga's CBD waterfront near Coronation Pier are extensive, sweeping from a glimpse of Mauao in the north, across the low arch of the harbour bridge and the lowlands around Tauranga Airport, to the Matapihi Peninsula and rail bridge, and the patchwork of farms and hills beyond – above Welcome Bay and Maungatapu. The open expanse of Waipu Bay fills the foreground and most of the middle distance of such views, with the profile of the harbour bridge – anchored by the Fresh Fish Market and Ballance plant at each end – effectively separating the harbour catchment abutting Tauranga's CBD from the more distant port and Mt Maunganui. POTL's container cranes and shipping operations lie on the far side of this natural point of demarcation in the landscape, and thus form part of the backdrop to the main area of attention within Waipu Bay itself and around its margins.

The outlook from this quarter mixes the more natural values of Waipu Bay's open waters and littoral margins with a low-lying patina of transport infrastructure, industrial premises, and suburban to rural-residential properties, that frame its flat plane. The CBD is also an important part of this enclosing 'frame'. As a whole, therefore, the outlook from around Coronation Pier is pleasant and attractive, but not particularly notable for any dramatic natural features or points of focus, other than a distant Mauao and the hills beyond Rangataua Bay to the south. Much more interest is found in the recently remodelled waterfront esplanade and its interplay with Tauranga's harbour fringe. Overall, therefore, Waipu Bay provides an appealing setting for Tauranga's CBD, but it is not spectacular, nor are its margins highly natural.

Visibility / Prominence:

The proposed Stage 1 and Stage 2 container cranes at the southern end of the existing Port would appear to be slightly higher than those currently visible above and beyond the harbour bridge (because of their proximity, except when the lower Articulated Boom Cranes operate at the northern end of the Stage 2 area), while shipping next to the new container berths would be slightly more prominent than those the vessels that currently 'tie up' at the terminal. Even so, both would remain within the background of views from this viewpoint.

At the same time, the proposed changes to the Minor Structures and Minor Vessel Berths area across Stella Passage, together with dredging operations in its channel, would be extremely difficult to discern.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

The new container cranes and closer container ships – even within the Stage 2 development area – would have a little impact on the mix and interplay of landscape elements visible from near Coronation Pier; nor would they appreciably affect the overall character and values of that part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour beyond the harbour bridge – effectively within the more remote, visual 'backcloth' to Waipu Bay. Although the pairs of cranes associated with both stages would elevate the profile of the container terminal slightly, they would not do so enough to change to change this interplay of elements around Stella Passage and the harbour bridge. Furthermore, neither the cranes nor associated shipping

would adversely affect views to Mauao, whose distinctive pyramidal form would remain, as now, well to the left of the container berths.

As a result, the perceived landscape effects associated with both Stages 1 and 2 would be of a low order.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

The project would not appreciably affect Stella Passage's water channel, its natural landforms, its natural processes or mix of land uses and activities. The new cranes and shipping would remain contained within part of the coastline that is strongly linked to current port activities and highly modified. Again, therefore any effects on Stella Passage's natural character values would be of a very low order.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
moderate-high	very low	low	very low
STAGE 2:			
moderate-high	low	low	very low

Viewpoint 8. **Tauranga Bridge Marina** (Attachment 28)

Existing Values:

Looking down and across Stella Passage from near Pier A, at the northern end of the Tauranga Bridge Marina, current views embrace the marina's own lines of berthed yachts and launches, terminating at its breakwater. Beyond, on the far side of Whareroa Bridge, the Port's storage area, sheds and moored vessels are viewed 'end on', together with fuel and log carriers, yet more sheds, and a mixture of ship-board cranes and light standards that climb above Butters Landing and the Maunganui Wharves. Across Stella Passage, stacks of containers – which often forms a skyline of its own – and the linear edge of the port area are often complemented by both container ships and cranes operating at the edge of the current Sulphur Point berths. More widely such views are often complemented by the fuller array of berths, jetties, vessels, masts and ancillary development (from a bar and boat repair workshop) to the edge of Te Awanui Drive, while other industrial premises occupy the western side of Stella Passage from the edge of the container terminal through to the harbour bridge.

With the exception of a small beach area and park at the southern end of the marina, this is a distinctly hard, maritime environment dominated by ships, boats, the Port, the marina and a sea passage that has a wholly artificial, linear profile. Most of the elements found within it (apart from its sea area) relate to shipping, transportation and the human use of sea vessels – of various kinds and sizes. There are few concessions to natural elements or naturalness. Even so, the vessels found both sides of Stella Passage still hold a degree of interest and fascination for many in the general community, as do activities associated with both the Port and marina. Consequently, much as views from the marina embrace a landscape that is wholly unnatural and industrial in many respects, it remains one that also has a degree of appeal and attraction for many.

Visibility / Prominence:

Closest to this viewpoint, the Stage 2 penguin nests and ramp would be located across the near edge of the Port's storage area and offices, while the outer edge of the bunker jetty would align with the edge of the existing wharf either side of it. Vessels moving in and out of it would be visible, but ships at the fuel jetty and log berths would still dominate the edge of the Wharf past Butters Landing.

Across Stella Passage, both the Stage 1 and 2 developments would be clearly visible – much as described in relation to Te Awanui Drive (Viewpoint 3) – with much of the far side of Stella Passage eventually dominated by the proposed berths, cranes and shipping movements.

Perceived Landscape Effects:

The project stages near Whareroa Bridge and Butters Landing would have very little impact on the maritime landscape already found in that area.

On the other hand, they would give rise to a significant degree of change down the near edge of Sulphur Point, with both container shipping and cranes much more visually prominent than at present. They would replace the existing container terminal and its stacked containers as the defining features of that western shoreline, and its horizon, bringing that part of the Port appreciably closer to the marina. Moreover, both stages would contribute to much the same level of change. Yet, the changes proposed

would remain contextualised by the distinctly maritime, working port and marina, landscape described above. The Port and shipping would lie at one end of that spectrum, while the marina and its recreational vessels would lie at the other, but both already contribute to the heavily modified landscape already found within and around Stella Passage. Consequently, even though the quantum of visual change within the channel would be significant, its core character would remain intact. The marina would feel slightly more hemmed in by the cranes and shipping; yet, if anything, the Stage 1 and 2 developments could – as described for Viewpoints 2 and 3 – create a frisson of positive tension by making the Port seem more tangible and 'close'. The far margins of Stella Passage would be more strongly defined, contained and visually intensive – in an appealing fashion – as well as more activated than the current container terminal edge, which would reinforce such impressions.

Taking all off these factors into account, it is considered that that Stage 1 and 2 developments and dredging would have a very low level of effect on this viewpoint.

Perceived Natural Character Effects:

In a similar vein, much as Stages 1 and 2 would appreciably change the landscape of Stella Passage, but not have an adverse effect its core values, the expanded container berths would sit within part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's coastal environment that is already at the highly modified, highly developed end of the natural character spectrum. Notwithstanding the scale of additional container ships, cranes and berths, it is difficult to see them appreciably altering or exacerbating this situation, even moreso in relation to views from a marina that contributes to the very limited naturalness of Stella Passage currently.

Ratings Summary:

Existing Values:	Visibility:	Perceived Landscape Effects:	Perceived Natural Character Effects:
STAGE 1:			
low-moderate	high	very low	very low
STAGE 2:			
low-moderate	high	very low	very low

8.5 Other Key Locations

In addition to the viewpoints already described and employed, which are typically located in quite close proximity to the Port, a number of other vantage points have been employed to explore the effects of the port proposals when viewed from further afield. These locations include marae that are linked to the Tauranga City District Plan viewshafts to Mauao, together with another from Ohauiti Road that passes over part of the Port (viewpoints are shown in **Attachment 29**). This is followed by brief analyses of the project's effects on residential sectors and some recreation areas that are also spread around the Port and Stella Passage: at Mt Maunganui, within Pilot Bay, down the western side of Sulphur Point and its Marine Park, and at Otūmoetai.

Waikari, Hungahungatoroa, Maungatawa and Maungatapu Maraes:

The following reviews address the effects that the proposed port developments would have on key views from the marae listed above, many of which are linked to the Tauranga City District Plan's viewshafts to Mauao (section 3.2). The photos accompanying this assessment were located at points agreed on site with local marae representatives.

Viewpoint 9. **Waikari Marae** (Attachment 30)

Figure 21: the upper profile of Mauao visible from Waikari Marae (Viewshaft 04 in Appendix 6D – see Figure 6, above)

At and near Waikari Marae, views towards Mauao are very significantly constrained by the Matapihi Peninsula's landform and shelterbelts across it. Neither the current cranes nor any other structures around the Port are visible in views from this quarter and it appears most unlikely that any would encroach into the profile of Mauao in the foreseeable future. Any effects generated by the proposed POTL developments would be of a Very Low order. Removal of the existing shelterbelts that restrict views towards Mauao would reduce the current level of screening, but the current and proposed container cranes would still remain to the left of Mauao, while the viewshaft would pass well over the Mt Maunganui side of the Port.

Removal of the shelterbelts that currently restrict views towards Mauao would reduce the current level of screening, if not that imposed by Matapihi's landform. Under such a scenario, the current and proposed container cranes would still lie to the left of Mauao, while the viewshaft – typically 24-28m (9-10 storeys) – passes over the current port east of Stella Passage, well above the proposed bunker jetty and other changes to that area. As a result, the Stage 1 and 2 developments proposed by PoTL would have a very low level of effect on views of Mauao.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*very low*	*very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Viewpoint 10. **Hungahungatoroa Marae** (Attachment 31)

Figure 22: Mauao viewed from Hungahungatoroa Marae (Viewshaft 03 in Appendix 6D – see Figure 6, above)

The edge of Hungahungatoroa Marae's ātea offers panoramic views out over Waipu Bay to Mauao, together with development at Mt Maunganui and around its margins. In such views, some of the Port's log area light towers appear as very fine 'threads' on blown-up photos that encroach into the view of the base of Mauao, while the container terminal and its cranes lie well to the left of it. The proposed Stage 1 and Stage 2 developments, both sides of Stella Passage, would stay well clear of Mauao. As a result, they would have a very low level of effect on perception of the maunga from Hungahungatoroa Marae and nearby.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*very low*	*very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Viewpoint 11. **Maungatawa Marae and Corporation Offices** (Attachment 32)

Figure 23: looking towards Mauao from Maungatawa Marae Corp. Offices (near Viewshaft 01 in Appendix 6D – see Figure 6, above)

Regardless of whether one is looking towards Mauao via a narrow viewshaft between marae housing from its ātea, or from the elevated platform of the Maungatawa Corporation offices, the current Port cranes and other structures lie well to the left of Mauao. The proposed PoTL developments would be even more visually dissociated from the maunga. Consequently, any effects generated by those proposals on views towards Mauao from this quarter would be of a very low order.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*very low*	*very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Viewpoint 12. **Maungatapu Marae** (Attachments 33 & 34)

Figure 24: the crest of Mauao visible from the beachfront next to Maungatapu Marae

In views from Maungatapu Marae, the ātea is tightly enclosed by landforms to the south and west, and – looking towards Rangataua Bay – a line of pohutukawas and other trees that separate it from a narrow beach running along the edge of Rangataua Bay. Although glimpses towards Mauao can be obtained through that vegetation, as well as from the much more elevated rugby and sports grounds nearby, the clearest views towards Mauao and the harbour from the marae environs are from its adjoining beachfront. As shown above, though, such views are restricted by the landform of the Matapihi Peninsula and vegetation across it.

Even though it is possible to walk further along the beach to the west and see part of the Stella Passage, the current container berths emerge to the left (west) of Mauao's base, while the extended container berths would be located even further away from the maunga. At the same time, the proposed developments near Butters Landing and Whareroa Bridge would both remain screened by Matapihi. As a result, the proposed PoTL developments would not encroach on Mauao and would instead read as part of the quite distant backdrop to both Rangataua Bay merging with Waipu Bay.

More elevated views from Te Pa o Te Ariki (Te Ariki Park) offer a slightly clearer view of Mauao as a whole, but are again limited to glimpses through the vegetation surrounding much of the ground (**Attachment 34**). These show the Port's existing container cranes partly in front of Mauao, while the four proposed cranes would either sit in much the same location or to the left of Mauao. Of note, Matapihi Peninsula screens out the rest of the Port and Stella Passage, while the connection between Ariki Park and Mauao, overall, is tenuous at best.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*very low*	*very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Viewpoint 13. **The Ohauiti Road Viewshaft** (Attachment 35)

Figure 25: Mauao viewed from Ohauiti Road (Viewshaft 15 in Appendix 6D – see Figure 6, above)

The viewshaft from Ohauiti Road to Mauao is aligned just to the west of the area proposed for Stage 1 and Stage 2 expansion at Sulphur Point, and looking from Ohauiti Road itself the proposed berths would steer just clear of Mauao's right-hand side and base. Consequently, the project would not encroach into the viewshaft, and in my opinion any landscape effects would also be of a very low order.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*low*	*low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Mt Maunganui's Main Residential Areas

As indicated in the discussion about the current Port and Stella Passage, most of the residential area between Maunganui Road and the main dune ridge that separates the western half of Mt Maunganui from that addressing the Pacific Ocean enjoys quite limited views of the Port currently. These are largely restricted to the elevated superstructures of some visiting cruise ships, some of the Port's larger buildings and silos, and the tops of its present container cranes (**Attachments 6** and **7**). Within the area generally east of Maunganui Road, the Port therefore has a quite low profile – sleeved by a range of light to heavy industry and commercial premises. The proposed container cranes would change the southern end of the port skyline, but those changes would be both subtle and incremental. Furthermore, as this area has no direct exposure to Stella Passage or the harbour, the project would not affect perceptions of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*low*	*low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Pilot Bay

Most of the residential catchment behind The Mall is also largely screened from most of Stella Passage and the Port. Conversely, those properties fronting The Mall have a more open, albeit 'end on', view of the Maunganui Roads, leading into Stella Passage lined by the Mt Maunganui and Sulphur Point Wharves (**Attachments 9** and **25**).

Even so, as is explained in relation to Viewpoint 5, both the proposed container berths and cranes would sit at the far end of the existing Sulphur Point berths, almost entirely screened by existing port structures and shipping at the northern end of Sulphur Point, while Stage 2's development of the 'minor structures and minor vessel berths' near Butters Landing would sit at the far end of the log port, partly screened by the log port and carriers berthed at it, the fuel jetty, and even the cruise ship berth much closer to Pilot Bay. Consequently, the project would have a very limited impact on the local community's perceptions of the Port landscape and wider harbour environment.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*very low*	*very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

The western side of Sulphur Point and its Marine Park

Most of the eastern side of Marine Park (together with the neighbouring car parks linked to the Tauranga Marina and the Sulphur Point Boat Ramp) address Keith Allen Drive, then PoTL's existing container terminal. The outlook across Keith Allen Drive is hard edged. It is dominated by the large sheds, container stacks, container cranes, light columns, vehicle movements and a broad swathe of hard standing. It is flanked by maritime and marine engineering, then bulk retail activities outside the Port.

More positively, this development also screens Stella Passage and most of the activity within it – other than the present container cranes and some shipping. The new Stage 1 and Stage 2 cranes, together with new light standards, would 'pop up' above the current vegetation and more structural elements within the container terminal, but would remain – like the current cranes – somewhat remote and small scale: reminding reserve users and some residents of the Port's presence, but not reaching the point of being particularly prominent, let alone dominant (**Attachment 14**). As the existing container terminal, cranes and lighting are already 'part and parcel' of this landscape, the additive or incremental effects of the proposed lights and cranes would be quite limited. Moreover, the new berths would not affect perceptions of the nearby harbour or its natural character values.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*low*	*low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

Otūmoetai

As is indicated in Section 5, most of Otūmoetai has limited contact with Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour and the Port. However, that part of the suburb next to Otūmoetai Beach and perched on some higher ridges have partial views of both. These would reveal the four new container cranes, in conjunction with those that already 'hover over' the mixture of parkland and industrial / commercial premises on Sulphur Point (Photos 26 and 27, **Attachments 15** and **16**). But, like the existing cranes, those proposed for Stages 1 and 2 would remain quite distant, even remote, and they would have a reasonable degree of visual compatibility with both the existing A-frame Cranes and the industrialised content of the existing container terminal. They would not be close enough to appear dominant or overly intrusive. Moreover, they would – like the existing cranes – remain well to the right of Mauao – while the proposed berths and additional shipping would remain largely screened by both the container stacks and pohutukawas flanking the current terminal – thus minimising any direct effects on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's natural character values.

	Stage 1:	***Stage 2:***
Landscape Effects:	*low*	*Very low*
Natural Character Effects:	*very low*	*very low*

8.6 Summary

Tables 7A and **7B**, below, summarise the findings of the viewpoint assessments:

Table 7A. Perceived Landscape Effects (Daytime)

		STAGE 1. Landscape Effects Ratings:	STAGE 2. Landscape Effects Ratings:
1.	**Whareroa Marae**	low	moderate
2.	**Tauranga Harbour Bridge**	low	low
3.	**Te Awanui Drive**	very low	very low
4.	**Mauao**	very low	very low
5.	**The Mall, Pilot Bay**	very low	very low
6.	**Hewletts Road**	very low	very low
7.	**Coronation Pier**	low	low
8.	**Tauranga Bridge Marina**	very low	very low
9.	**Waikari Marae**	very low	very low
10.	**Hungahungatoroa Marae**	very low	very low
11.	**Maungatawa Marae**	very low	very low
12.	**Maungatapu Marae**	very low	very low
13.	**Ohauiti Road**	low	low
14.	**Mt Maunganui's Residential Area**	low	low
15.	**Pilot Bay**	very low	very low
16.	**The Western Side of Sulphur Point**	low	low-moderate
17.	**Otūmoetai**	low	low

Table 7B. Perceived Natural Character Effects (Daytime)

		STAGE 1. Natural Character Effects Ratings:	STAGE 2. Natural Character Effects Ratings:
1.	**Whareroa Marae**	very low	very low
2.	**Tauranga Harbour Bridge**	very low	very low
3.	**Te Awanui Drive**	very low	very low
4.	**Mauao**	very low	very low
5.	**The Mall, Pilot Bay**	very low	very low
6.	**Hewletts Road**	very low	very low
7.	**Coronation Pier**	very low	very low
8.	**Tauranga Bridge Marina**	very low	very low
9.	**Waikari Marae**	very low	very low
10.	**Hungahungatoroa Marae**	very low	very low
11.	**Maungatawa Marae**	very low	very low
12.	**Maungatapu Marae**	very low	very low
13.	**Ohauiti Road**	very low	very low
14.	**Mt Maunganui's Residential Area**	very low	very low
15.	**Pilot Bay**	very low	very low
16.	**The Western Side of Sulphur Point**	very low	very low
17.	**Otūmoetai**	very low	very low

Key factors that have contributed to these low ratings for both Stages 1 and 2 can be summarised as follows:

Landscape Effects:

- The integration and visual merger of 'new' and 'old' berths / wharves, areas of hard standing, container handling areas, cranes, lighting, sheds and other structural elements in most views – including from the top of Mauao and The Mall's beachfront;

- The highly modified nature of Stella Passage and the current Port environment – that clearly differentiate this part of the coastline from the rest of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour;

- The highly modified and industrial nature of the immediate coastal hinterland behind and around the Stage 1 and 2 expansion / reclamation areas;

- The screening and filtering of views towards Stella Passage and (in particular) the Stage 2 development area down Sulphur Point that is visible from much of Whareroa Marae;

- The clear point of division between Waipu Bay near Tauranga's CBD and Stella Passage established by the Harbour Bridge and Whareroa Bridge;

- The separation of development within most of the proposed development areas from key views of Mauao, including those from local marae (other than Whareroa) and other key vantage points;

- The very 'hard', utilitarian environment that frames views from Hewletts Road and Te Awanui Drive – most notably on the Mt Maunganui side of the Tauranga Bridge Marina;

- The flat viewing perspective past existing port areas, buildings, structures and shipping into the Stage 1 and 2 development areas from many public vantage points, including those in the vicinity of Whareroa Marae, The Mall, the lower margins of Mauao, Hewletts Road, the Tauranga Harbour Marina , and most of the residential areas at Mt Maunganui and Otūmoetai, together with the western side of Sulphur Point;

- The more positive spatial qualities associated with greater enclosure and definition of Stella Passage by the anticipated ships within Stella Passage – with both the Stage 1 and 2 developments helping to enhance the waterway's axial nature and form; and

- The closer degree of contact with the Port's operational areas and activities that would be afforded by some public vantage points – that would be appreciated by some (though not all) viewers.

Natural Character Effects:

- The highly modified state of Stella Passage and its port margins already, including the lining of most of its coastal edge by piled jetties, rock armouring, marina breakwaters, jetties and boat ramps;

- The presence of berthed ships, moored vessels and areas subject to consented dredging within the current waterway;

- A relative absence of natural vegetation that matches the highly modified state of local coastal landforms;

- The limited presence of natural processes other than tidal movements and some wave fetch within the sea channel: red beaked gulls and terns are also present – both feeding on schools of fish within Stella Passage and roosting on the rock armouring at the edge of the Port – but these are the subject of a separate detailed assessment for PoTL;

- The alignment of the proposed uses, activities and structures with those already found within Stella Passage;

- The highly developed and modified state of that immediate environment, which establishes a (low) natural character benchmark for Stella Passage and its immediate hinterland.

Above all else, the integration and consolidation of Port activities within part of the harbour that is already intensively developed for such activities is a key factor that has contributed to the typically low Landscape Effects ratings and very low Natural Character Effects ratings, aided by the 'sleeving' of the proposed development areas and Stella Passage by other industrial premises, two marinas and related uses around the periphery of Sulphur Point and the Mt Maunganui port. Tauranga Harbour is physically very extensive, and its coastline embraces a wide range of land uses and biophysical conditions. However, as indicated in Section 5, the area within, and immediately around, Stella Passage lies towards the bottom of the naturalness spectrum – both in relation to landscape values and natural character values. This is clearly reflected in the effects ratings for both.

It is also important to note that the proposed developments would reinforce and consolidate public perceptions of an area that already that has a clearly defined identity. The proposed wharf extensions and reclamation would not appreciably alter the identity and sense of place of part of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour that is already closely associated with the existing Port, and related maritime, operations.

8.7 Cultural Engagement and Cultural Landscape Effects

Specific effects on cultural landscape values, including taonga and kaimoana, are addressed in Sections 7, 8.4 and 8.5 (Viewpoint 1 and Other Key Locations) of this report. In addition, a number of Cultural Value Assessments (CVA) / Cultural Impact Assessments (CIA) have been prepared for PoTL, in which a number of landscape and natural character issues associated with the Port's expansion are identified. **Table 6**, overleaf, summarises the key issues raised by Tauranga iwi and hapū groups, together with any CVA/CIA recommendations proposed to respond to them. This is accompanied by analysis of the concerns raised to assess the nature and magnitude of the additional 'cultural landscape' effects identified, and to determine whether or not the CVA/CIA recommendations would be meaningful from a landscape / natural character standpoint.

Cultural Landscape Issues Identified in CVAs:	CVA Mitigation Recommendations:	Analysis of Effects Identified:	Analysis of Mitigation Measures Proposed:
Traditional viewshafts between Ngāti Ranginui urupā and marae are already obstructed by Port infrastructure. Motuopae and Otamataha urupā are the closest Ngāti Ranginui urupā to the Port: the cultural viewshafts from these urupā to and from Mauao are obstructed. POTL intends to install two cranes 110m tall and 2 cranes up to 78m tall. There is a potential for these cranes to further obstruct the view to Mauao. The Oikimoke, Poututerangi and Epiha Pā sites and burial grounds are impacted by the Port's lighting which is heavily obtrusive to the cultural viewshaft of the akau (skyline) to Mauao.	Commission a cultural landscape assessment to assess the impacts on cultural viewshafts, and trace ara to understand how the project will impact on the ara.	The issue of the proposed cranes' effects on Ngāti Ranginui's Motuopae and Otamataha urupā was raised at the Direct Referral Hearing of the Environment Court in 2022. In response to these concerns, and to inform this assessment, photos were taken which show the location of Mauao, the Port cranes and Motuopae Island relative to one another. As is depicted in Figures 26 and 27, overleaf, when looking from either Motuopae or the shoreline of the Waikareao Estuary near the island, Mauao lies well to the left of the current Port cranes. Consequently, a viewshaft from the urupā to Mauao would also pass well to the left of the cranes – both existing and proposed. Indeed, the new cranes would actually be located at the right-hand end of the container terminal, furthest away from Mauao. As such, they would have no impact on views of Mauao from either the urupā or Motuopae Island and the cranes' daytime effects would be of a low to very low order. Night-time lighting has the theoretical potential to increase the ambient, 'halo' lighting around the Port. However, Kern Consultants' Report – which is addressed in in Section 8.8 and appended to this assessment as **Appendix A** – determines that light spillage from the new LED lights to be employed on the proposed cranes would result in in a 0.0% increase in luminance along SH2 / Te Awanui Drive. They would have a minimal impact on locations further afield. Accordingly, it is anticipated that the additional lighting on the new cranes would have a very low (or negligible) level of effect.	There is no need for mitigation measures in relation to the viewshaft between the Motuopae and Otamataha urupā and Mauao. The LED lighting proposed for the new container cranes will preclude further light spill and 'glare' of the kind that is currently associated with the Port.
Disruption of tikanga and kawa arising from further modification of the harbour and its character.	N/A	This report does not attempt to address the customs, traditional values, and protocols of local iwi, although concerns about such values are found in many of the published histories addressed in Section 5.2. Related concerns raised in the CVA/CIAs, include diminished access to kaimoana, but it seems unlikely that this would be the case within Stella Passage, while the loss of kaimoana – also cited in the CVA/CIAs – is addressed in the assessment of ecological values and effects by Dr de Luca on behalf of the PoTL.	
The creation of a more industrialised vista down Stella Passage from Tauranga Harbour Bridge causing a psychological and cultural impact by changing how the landscape is experienced – together with related concerns about the natural character of Tauranga Moana being progressively lost as the Port grows.	To address visual impacts, some recommendations are: use colours and designs for new structures that blend a bit more with the natural surroundings (e.g., crane paint that is less garish, if feasible). Incorporate Māori design elements on new buildings or sound barriers.	It is acknowledged that expansion of the Port would further modify the sea channel of Stella Passage and further develop / industrialise its margins. In particular, this would affect the Port-framed views of Mauao from the Tauranga Harbour Bridge – looking down and beyond the channelised 'open space' of Stella Passage. Having made this point, it is also important to recognise that Stella Passage is already the most modified, developed, and industrialised part of Tauranga Harbour. Moreover, the proposed port expansion would occur within the Outline Development Plan footprint for the Port contained in the RCEP, and it is enclosed by large areas of industrial development. Consequently, the effects of further Port development would be more contained and much more limited within the environs of Stella Passage than	It is understood that aviation safety requirements largely dictate the colour scheme adopted for the Port's container cranes, while a viewing platform at the northern end of Sulphur Point could well conflict with the operations of the existing container terminal. However, it is understood that PoTL

	The creation of a viewing platform or cultural interpretive area near Sulphur Point.	if Port expansion were to occur in another part of the harbour. From a natural character / landscape perspective, it is therefore considered to be more appropriate to concentrate modification within part of the coastline that has already been extensively (and intensively) modified than to 'break new ground' in more natural parts of Tauranga's coastal environment.	propose to provide a one-off payment of $500,000 for iwi and hapū to help incorporate Mātauranga Māori principles and design in pouwhenua and other structures around the Port – reflecting the importance of its land area and coastal environment to tangata whenua.
Extension of the new wharves and cranes into Mauao's profile, together with concern that its silhouette will be visually "crowded" or obscured from the city side of Te Papa peninsula (a key viewpoint) looking north and east toward Mauao and Matakana Island. This would reduce Mauao's mana. New, taller, cranes and gantries could make the Port more prominent when viewed from inland areas, where many local Māori live.	As above.	Much as the expanded Port would affect views from the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, including to Mauao, it would have a low level of effect on views of Mauao from other locations of importance to local iwi – including those from such local marae as Whareroa, Waikari, Hungahungatoroa, Maungatawa, Mangatapu, and the Huria Marae and Motuopae and Otamataha urupā that are associated with the Waikareao Estuary. Although concern is also raised about the profile of the new wharves and cranes relative to Tauranga's Te Papa Peninsula near Dive Crescent, any effects on this area would be quite limited, given the quite restricted nature of present-day views from this area to the Port's current cranes – as shown in Figure 28, overleaf. The actual berths would not be visible at all from this location. Accordingly, while it is apparent that the expanded Port would further modify Stella Passage and its margins, such effects would, in reality, be of a low order.	
Extension of the Port's encroachment on local iwis' cultural identity (notwithstanding its existing industrial character and surrounds), including the severance of links between Tauranga's rivers, harbour and the sea, and obscuring access to traditional sites.	N/A	Further development of Stella Passage's margins to accommodate the additional proposed container berths would indeed, harden the margins of Stella Passage and reduce its naturalness. Yet, the Passage is an artificial structure and the level of connection between Waipu Bay and the main body of Tauranga Harbour would be little altered by the proposed berths. Taking into account the other factors discussed above, it is therefore considered that the proposed container vessel berths and the 'minor structures and minor vessel berths' opposite would actually do little to increase the 'fragmentation' of the river-harbour-sea system.	
The limited extent of 'cultural landscape viewpoint assessment' undertaken to date	Undertake a cultural landscape assessment for important viewpoints of importance to iwi.	Concerns about cultural engagement with local iwi and gaining an iwi perspective on the values of Te Awanui/Tauranga Harbour were key factors that underpinned PoTL's decision to resource the preparation of the CVA/CIAs that have been provided to date. Moreover, the site visit to the Whareroa, Waikari, Hungahungatoroa, Maungatawa, and Mangatapu Marae on the 2nd of April 2022, followed by site visits to the Huria Marae and Motuopae Island later that same year, sought to address specific concerns raised by iwi about PoTL's expansion plans. This also led to participation in the Iwi / Hapu Information Forum Teams Meeting organised by Mahea NZ Limited on behalf of Port on the 4th of March 2025.	Viewpoints of importance to iwi have been addressed in the course of this and previous assessments. Having said this, it is conceivable that other viewpoints of importance to local iwi might be identified, although it appears that any such viewpoints would be more distant from the Port than those assessed in this report.

Figure 26. Looking from the end of Te Kaponga Street over Motuopea Island and the Waikareao Estuary towards the Port's current container cranes, with Mauao well to the left of that 'viewshaft'

Figure 27. Looking from the edge of the Waikareao Estuary over Motuopea Island towards the Port's existing container cranes, again with Mauao well to the left of that 'viewshaft'

Figure 28. Looking from the edge of Dive Crescent near Te Papa Peninsula towards Stella Passage and Mauao

8.8 Night-time Effects

Several key locations are exposed to PoTL's area of port operations and dredging at night-time. These include Pilot Bay and the Tauranga Harbour Bridge, whereas other locations – including most of Mt Maunganui's residential area and Otūmoetai – are largely screened from it by the existing Port and other development. The following night-time photos taken from the Harbour Bridge and Pilot Bay capture more direct views of Stella Passage and the Maunganui Roads (**Attachments 48** and **49**):

Figure 29: Looking towards the Maunganui Roads and Stella Passage from Pilot Bay

Figure 30: Looking towards the Maunganui Roads and Stella Passage from Tauranga Harbour Bridge

The combination of lights on the four proposed container cranes (Stages 1 and 2), additional berthed ships, and new light towers on the Maunganui Berths would contribute to a more 'lit up' environment around Stella Passage. This lighting is permitted under the RCEP and Tauranga City Plan, but nevertheless has the potential to compound the effects already described in relation to PoTL's development proposals.

The potential effects derived from lighting can be divided into those that directly impact on residential amenity, or other amenity values, and therefore have a 'nuisance' value, and those that adversely affect the aesthetic nature and appeal of the night-time 'landscape'. Nuisance effects embody a clear sense of intrusion or incursion in relation to receiving environments and communities / audiences, whereas effects on the night-time environment tend to be more subtle. In fact, effects derived from lighting have a limited impact on landscape values *per se*, simply because most landscape elements and features become increasingly shrouded in darkness as night falls. Nevertheless, lighting can have an aesthetic impact upon:

- the relative visual presence and 'intactness' of the night sky and its canvas of stars; and
- the relative blackness, solitude and remoteness associated with some locations at night-time.

The prominence of night lighting can sometimes be further exacerbated by the flashing and 'sweeping' of some lights at night-time – often associated with vehicle movements and warning lights. To assist with evaluation of such effects, **Attachments 36-41** show the location of five representative night-time photopoints, and capture views from them towards the Port – from the following locations:

Photopoint A. **Pillans Road Reserve** (overlooking the Otūmoetai Estuary)

Photopoint B. **Tauranga Harbour Bridge**

Photopoint C. **Whareroa Boat Ramp** (next to Whareroa Marae Reserve)

Photopoint D. **Sunderland Avenue** (Mt Maunganui)

Photopoint E. **The Mall, Pilot Bay**

Tauranga Harbour Bridge currently offers the most expansive views of both the current Port and Stella Passage. Activities around the existing container terminal and log handling wharves are already brightly lit and provide a strong focal point, while the flow of traffic across the bridge also commands attention – at the expense of the night sky and its more passive, scenic, qualities. This is also the case in relation to views from Pilot Bay, with the brightly lit, container terminal and outer Port already a major point of focus in views from The Mall and its beach reserve.

By contrast, views from Pillans Avenue, on the edge of Otūmoetai, and Sunderland Avenue, on part of the main dune ridge within Mt Maunganui's residential area, are more limited by 'darkened areas' created by the western side of the container terminal and the large industrial area stretching down the eastern side of Totara Street – both of which are relatively 'quiet' at night-time. Light associated with the current container terminal and existing Port light towers rise above these intervening areas to create a halo of light that is clearly apparent on the skyline, although most lighting and activity closer to ground

and sea level is almost entirely screened from view. Of the five viewpoints examined in detail, that near the Whareroa Marae is least affected by the Port's current lighting. Instead, it is the activity and lighting along Te Awanui Drive that captures most attention near the boat ramp and marae, with little visual incursion or intrusion apparent in relation to the Port's present lighting and activities.

Even so, none of the viewpoints examined could be regarded as particularly tranquil and / or strongly focused on the night sky. Four of the five viewpoints already reveal a significant level of interaction with the Port's existing container terminal and lighting down its other wharves, while views from the harbour bridge offer a dynamic overview of Stella Passage and its already strongly lit margins – which include the marina near the very foot of the bridge. Only the Whareroa Boat Ramp offers any real sense of seclusion and appreciable separation from the existing port area and its night-time environs.

Having said this, both Photopoints A and D (Pillans Road and Sunderland Avenue) reveal a higher level of exposure to the Port than most neighbouring residential areas. Consequently, the greater bulk of residential Otūmoetai and Mt Maunganui are also substantially screened from the Port by intervening development and landforms and it appears likely that this would remain the case even with the proposed port expansion.

Given the urban nature of most views associated with these photopoints, and those experienced from within Tauranga and Mt Maunganui more generally, there is little likelihood that the expanded area of Port operations and lighting would affect the more subtle night-time values outlined above, including any feelings of remoteness, solitude, quietude (visually), or appreciation of a 'dark sky'. The night sky may well be visible, but the existing light environment of Tauranga's urban / suburban areas already diminishes appreciation of it as a 'window on the stars'.

At the same time, the existing container terminal and sheds near Keith Allen Drive on Sulphur Point, together with the Totara Street industrial area and Bay Oval provide a sizeable buffer between the Port and its nearest residential 'neighbours' on the edges of Otūmoetai and northern Mt Maunganui. Moreover, these areas are already exposed to part of the Port's night-time environment – associated with the light towers and cranes both sides of Stella Passage. As a result, the fundamental nature of the night-time environment would not change with expansion of the Port, and the new lighting – on towers, cranes and ships, for the most part – would have an incremental effect, rather than appearing new and different. Looking towards the expanded Port from the direction of Pilot Bay (Photopoint E), the additional lighting would sit behind and beyond that already associated with the Mt Maunganui wharves and the container terminal near the mouth of Stella Passage.

The situation in relation to the Whareroa Marae is somewhat different as the extended container terminal and its lighting would become visible beyond Te Awanui Drive, on the far side of Stella Passage, in a way, and to an extent, that is not presently apparent. Yet, awareness of this new lighting would still be limited by the physical presence and intervention of the Ballance fertiliser plant; while Te Awanui Drive, the boat ramp car park and even the marae grounds – which turn away from Stella Passage to address Taiaho Place – would all help to buffer the wharenui and nearby marae housing from the extended container terminal.

In addition, Kern Consultants were commissioned by PoTL to undertake a detailed review of the effects that lighting would have on the environment around the Port, and in the vicinity of Whareroa Marae more specifically. Their report (attached as **Appendix A** to this report) summarises the effects of the proposed crane lighting as follows:

a) The proposed floodlights would result in a 0.0% increase in luminance along SH2 / Te Awanui Drive.

b) The proposed floodlights will (**Appendix A**: paragraph 21) "*not affect residents in Whareroa Marae*", and the predictive assessment of lux levels around the proposed cranes shows a "*0.00*" increase in light spill near and within the marae (Figure 28).

c) There remains the potential for sky glow or the sort of light 'halo' above the enlarged Port, as is described at paragraph 19 of Kern Consultants' report. Yet, the report indicates that such effects could be managed through fine-tuning of the new floodlight's placement and orientation. Such glare from the proposed crane lighting (paragraph 25 of the Kern Report,) "*will be 315cd and is less than the permitted 2,500cd after curfew to meet AS / NZS 4282 Zone A4 requirements*."

These findings are supported by the following measurement chart, Figure 28 (overleaf), which shows the calculated additional light spill from the new container cranes in lux. Overall, therefore, it is recognised that the project would have some degree of an effect on catchments represented by the viewpoints set out above. However, such effects would typically be of a low order and incremental in nature – primarily arising from shipping, rather than the Port and its new cranes. The proposed lighting would not give rise to any significant 'nuisance' effects and would not appreciably alter or degrade the nature and intactness of Tauranga's night sky.

Table 7. Perceived Landscape Effects (Night-time)

		Landscape Effects Ratings:
1.	**Pillans Road Reserve, Otūmoetai**	very low
2.	**Tauranga Harbour Bridge**	very low
3.	**Whareroa Marae**	low
4.	**Sunderland Avenue**	low
5.	**The Mall, Pilot Bay**	low

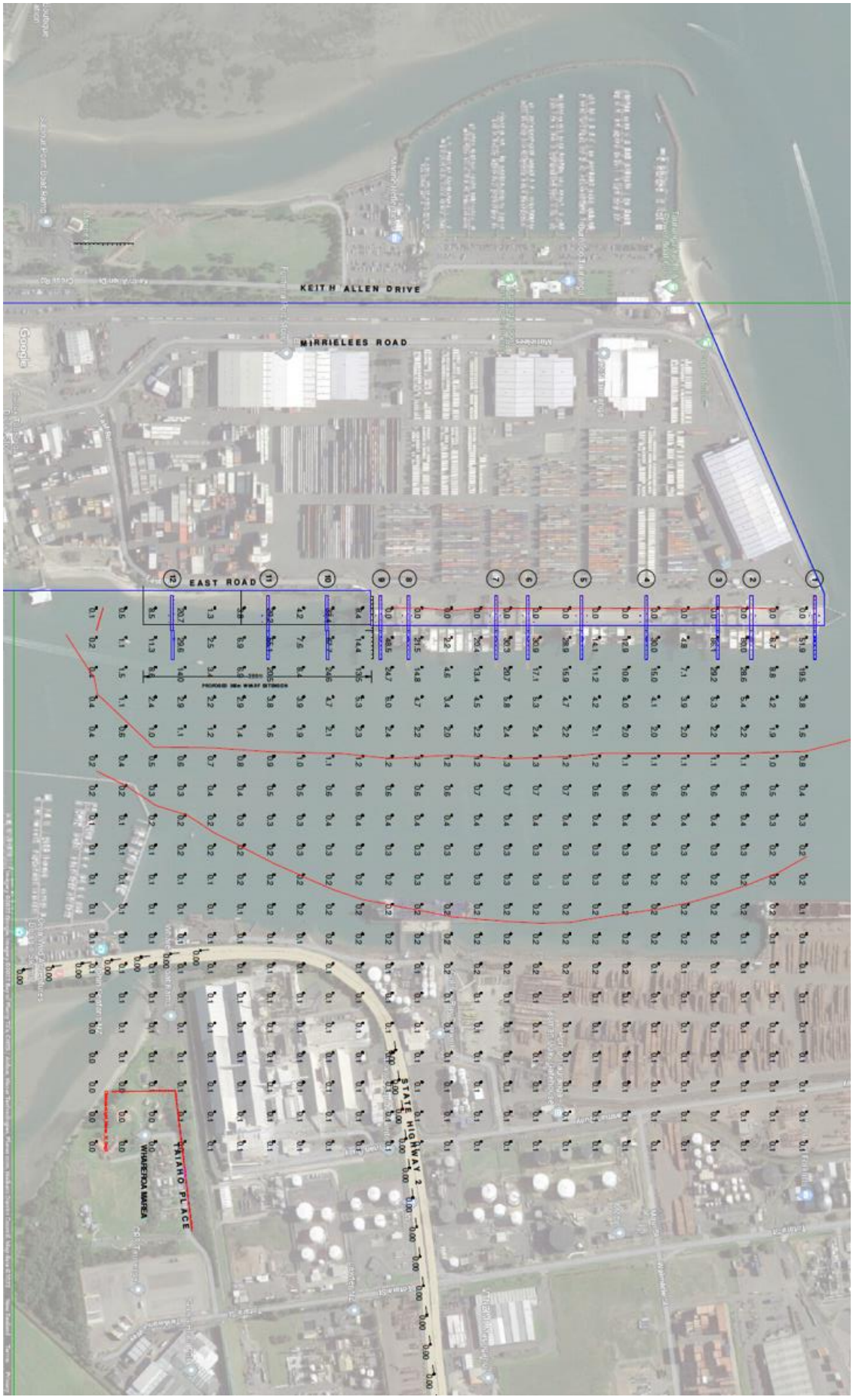


Figure 28: map of projected lux levels for proposed container cranes extracted from page 8 of the Report (**Appendix A**).

9. Statutory Evaluation

The various provisions of the NZCPS, RPS, RCEP and the TCP set out to:

- Preserve the natural character values of the coastal environment;
- Protect the Region's ONFLs, including most of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, Matakana Island;
- Protect the Region's ASCVs, notably that of Te Paritaha and the combined Mauao, Moturiki and Motuotau Island Marine Area;
- Support the Port Zone applied to Tauranga Port as a critical piece of the Region's and City's infrastructure and its continued operations being of national significance.

Inevitably, there is a degree of tension between these provisions, notably where they address environments with different values that physically meet or are juxtaposed with one another – as is the case around the margins of both the Port and Stella Passage. Yet, the specialist assessments of effects on harbour bathymetry, hydrology, water quality and marine ecology all indicate that the effects of proposed Stages 1 and 2 on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, together with key features within it, would be of a minimal to low order – apart from the physical reconfiguration of the Passage's margins.

Rule PZ 9 of the RCEP and City Plan Rule 18A.15 indicate that a restricted discretionary resource consent is required for cranes which are not permitted under RCEP Rule PZ 4. Yet, under both Rules, discretion is restricted to the effects of cranes on airport operations and safety. They preclude consideration of any other effects of proposed cranes.

9.1 Rule PZ 8

RCEP Rule PZ 8 applies to other buildings and structures (excluding cranes) in the Port Zone, and it directs the assessment of effects (in relation to landscape and natural character) towards five key matters:

> *(b) The finished visual appearance* [of the buildings and structures] *when viewed from a public place.*
>
> *(c) The effects of glare and lighting.*
>
> *(e) Effects on the hydrodynamic and geomorphic regime of the harbour.*
>
> *(l) Coastal water quality including the provisions of Section 3 – Coastal Discharges and Schedule 13 to this Plan.*
>
> *(o) Site specific historical or cultural values under ss 6(e) or 7(a) of the RMA.*

This assessment of the project relative to these matters indicates that both Stages 1 and 2 would generally have a very low to low level of effect in relation to most surrounding areas and public vantage points. This includes Whareroa Marae, which is located close to the current Port and is a key receiving

environment. Even so, the effects of Stage 2 on the marae are expected to rise to a low-moderate level. Addressing the wider harbour and Port surrounds, it is also anticipated that the proposed developments would have:

- A low level of effect in relation to ONFL 3 as a whole (Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour);
- A low level of effect on Te Paritaha and ASCV-4A;
- A very low level of effect on Mauao and Panepane (ONFLs 5 and 10); and
- A very low to low level of effect in relation to those urban and suburban areas that are both near and exposed to the Port, Stella Passage and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour – including residential areas within Mt Maunganui and Pilot Bay, at Otūmoetai, and on the margins of the Tauranga CBD.

9.2 Other Key RCEP and RPS Provisions

The following summaries then turn to evaluation of the port proposals against relevant objectives and policies of the RCEP that address the Port:

Policy PZ3: The proposed berths, cranes, lighting and other shoreside facilities proposed are consistent with the structures and areas of capital dredging identified in Schedule 9 of the RCEP.

Policy PZ5: The new structural development proposed would be concentrated within part of the coastal environment that is already highly modified and away from other areas that display high natural character and landscape values, and recreational value. This would contribute to the proposed port development having very limited 'conflict' with other activities.

Having said this, the Stage 2 proposals would have up to a low - moderate level of landscape effect on Whareroa Marae, in particular the proposed cranes and shipping – although the proposed container cranes can only be assessed in relation to effects on aviation activities and the nearby airport, while port shipping is a Permitted Activity under the RCEP.

Policy PZ14: The proposed structures and dredging would not encroach further on Te Paritaha O Awanui, and the specialist assessments of geomorphological, hydrological, water quality and ecological effects – including those pertaining to kaimoana – would be of a low order.

The following summaries focus on effects that are particularly relevant to the RCEP's broader provisions addressing Natural Heritage (Section 2.2):

Objective 2: The port development proposals would not appreciably affect ONFLs 3, 6 and 10 within and abutting other parts of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour or any areas of high,

very high and outstanding natural character in the coastal environment. This is important in relation to Policy 15(a) of the NZCPS.

Objective 3: The port development would occur within part of the harbour environs that are already highly developed and modified. As such, it would not appreciably alter the integrity, form, functioning and resilience of the coastal environment. As such, it would have no effect on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's indigenous biodiversity (generally). This is significant in relation to Policy 13 of the NZCPS.

Objective 4: The proposed developments would not result in further loss of the quality and extent of rare and threatened habitats, include seagrass beds.

Objective 5: The port developments would not affect the potential for restoration and rehabilitation of the natural heritage of the coastal environment within other parts of Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour, ie. away from the already highly modified port area and Stella Passage.

Turning very briefly to related policies in the Bay of Plenty RCEP, the proposed port development would:

Policy CE 2B: Preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development by avoiding areas of high, very high, or outstanding natural character, and avoiding the generation of significant adverse on other parts of the coastal environment.

Policy CE 3A: Respond appropriately to key constraints associated with Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's coastal environment through its siting and co-location with existing port berths, facilities and structures.

Policy CE 8B: Ensure that the expanded port activities and development are appropriate in terms of the natural character of the coastal environment, again due to the location of the future developments and their integration with the existing Port.

9.3 Summary

As a result, it is considered that the port developments would be quite benign in term of their effects, and would be aligned with nearly all of the objectives, policies and rules applicable to the Port and Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour.

The only area of concern in this regard is that of the project's Stage 2 landscape effects on Whareroa Marae, although these remain at a less-than-significant level. Furthermore, they largely pertain to the proposed Stage 2 cranes that would comply with flight path height controls associated with Tauranga Airport, and that only remain a Restricted Discretionary Activity in relation to their potential effects on aviation (notwithstanding compliance with the flight path controls).

Overall, it is considered that the port developments comply with Objectives 2 and 6 of the NZCPS, together with Policies 13 and 15. It is further assessed that they comply with sections 6(a), 6(b) and 7(c) of the Resource Management Act.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the Stella Passage Development would result in physical and visual changes to Stella Passage – in the form of new reclamations and new berths – that are largely consistent with the existing maritime landscape found in and around that waterway.

As a result, the effects generated by the expanded container berths at Sulphur Point and the 'minor structures and minor vessel berths' near the log port and Butters Landing would be incremental, having a quite limited impact in their own right. More significant in this regard would be the associated container cranes and shipping, although the latter are Permitted Activities under the RCEP, while the assessment criteria relevant to cranes that breach RCEP Rule PZ4 solely address aviation safety and Tauranga Airport's flight paths.

Notwithstanding this, when both Port expansion stages are assessed 'in the round' – including all cranes and shipping – the effects on perceptual and associative landscape values would increase slightly, most notably in relation to Whareroa Marae in conjunction with Stage 2. Even so, those effects would remain at a moderate level and would largely pertain to the proposed container cranes that are only subject to RD Assessment Matters which focus on Tauranga Airport's flight paths.

At the same time, effects on Te Awanui / Tauranga Harbour's bathymetry and geomorphology, its tidal flows and flushing, water quality, benthic communities, and even fish life, are described by other specialists as being minimal, or of a low order. These findings have contributed to the very low natural character effects ratings attributed a wide range of receiving environments around the Port and the low level of effect that the port expansion would have on associative values – addressed mainly in relation to Whareroa Marae.

Indeed, the options for mitigation of the effects identified are limited by the multiplicity and wide-ranging nature of views towards both Stella Passage and the Port. Having said this, the pohutukawas next to Te Awanui Drive are still growing, and these will help to limit the effects of the Stage 1 and 2 developments on Whareroa Marae (in particular) – without screening all of the anticipated shipping and cranes at the southern end of the Port. However, any additional pohutukawa planting near the Whareroa Boat Ramp Car Park, or even the marae, would further enclose the marae and limit its visual interaction with the Kaimai Range, which remains partly visible over the existing Sulphur Point Container Terminal. It is also important to reiterate at this juncture that PoTL have already reduced some of the expanded Port's effects by relinquishing proposals for extension of the Mt Maunganui wharves southwards, down to the Butters Landing area near Whareroa Bridge. Had that proposal proceeded, then it is likely that there would be greater awareness of shipping and cranes near the bridge than is now contemplated.

It is further understood that PoTL propose to provide a one-off payment of $500,000 for iwi and hapū to help incorporate Mātauranga Māori principles and design in pouwhenua and other structures around the Port – so as to acknowledge the significance of the land on which the Port of Tauranga to

located to tangata whenua. More immediately, though, it appears both appropriate and meaningful for the landscape effects mitigation to be provided for through the proposed ecological enhancement in the vicinity of the Port, including the provision of roosting boxes for blue penguins near Whareroa Bridge and Butters Landing, the creation of a relocated gull and tern colony north of the fuel jetty, and the provision of on-going monitoring in relation to pipi, tuangi and other kaimoana on Te Paritaha, as well as within the near margins of Waipu Bay.

Acknowledging the above, overall, the project is considered to be acceptable in terms of its landscape and natural character effects, without any screening or other mitigation measures.

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APPENDIX A:

Kern Consultants' Lighting Effects Report