

**BEFORE THE HEARING COMMISSIONERS  
NAPIER**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource Management Act 1991  
(the Act)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of applications by Port of Napier Limited  
to undertake wharf expansion,  
associated capital and maintenance  
dredging, disposal of dredged material  
within the coastal marine area, and  
occupation of the coastal marine area  
for existing port activities and the  
proposed new wharf

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF RACHEL VIRGINIA DE LAMBERT**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Qualifications and experience**

1. My name is Rachel Virginia de Lambert. I am a landscape architect and Partner of Boffa Miskell Limited based in Auckland.
2. I have a Bachelor of Horticulture Science and a post graduate Diploma of Landscape Architecture from Lincoln College (as it then was, now University). I am a Fellow and Registered Member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects.
3. I have more than 30 years' experience as a landscape architect including in the areas of landscape and visual assessment, urban design, traditional landscape design and masterplanning projects.
4. I have been or remain a member of a number of design and urban design forums, including the former Auckland City and Manukau City Urban Design Panels, and the Auckland City Mayoral Urban Design Workforce and the Panuku Development Auckland Technical Advisory Group. I am currently Convenor for the Auckland Urban Design Panel.
5. Much of my experience has been in the area of landscape and visual assessment. I have undertaken independent reviews of proposed development projects for local authority and private clients at the resource consent / council hearing and Environment Court stages. I have prepared assessment reports and presented evidence at a number of Council and Environment Court hearings.
6. Whilst based in Auckland I have undertaken a number of projects in the Hawkes Bay region over the years and am generally familiar with the region and its main centres, Napier, Hastings and Havelock North.

### **Involvement in project**

7. Since 2005, I have assisted The Port of Napier in respect of the consideration of potential landscape and visual effects resulting from Port expansion proposals that have been considered over time.
8. In 2016 I undertook an assessment of the potential landscape (including natural character) and visual effects of

the proposed port wharf extension and dredging works for which consent is now sought (Port of Napier, Proposed Berth Extension, dated 26 July 2016).

9. As part of that assessment a series of three (3) technically accurate visual simulations from representative public viewpoints were prepared. These formed part of the basis of assessment of visual effects.

#### **Expert Witness Code of Conduct**

10. I have been provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court's Practice Note dated 1 December 2014. I have read and agree to comply with that Code. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

#### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

11. The purpose of this evidence is to confirm my original assessment in respect of the landscape, including natural character, and visual effects arising from the proposal.
12. The proposal involves a new, broadly east / west aligned wharf berth parallel with and adjoining the existing main port reclamation area. The wharf will have a width of approx. 35m and a length of 350m.
13. Associated with the wharf will be new light towers, as well as additional reefer towers for access to containers (up to four high). There will also be some associated reorganisation to the existing layout of containers.
14. In terms of construction, some works will be undertaken from a barge on water with most works from the landward side.

#### **TECHNICAL REPORT - SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

15. My report (Port of Napier, Proposed Berth Extension, dated 26 July 2016) is at Appendix N, Volume 3.
16. It is my opinion that the proposed 350m wharf structure and associated transient occupation of the new berth by ships will not generate more than minor long or short term adverse visual effects for users of the adjacent road network, walkways, coastal edge or other public places, as seen from

the water, land or air. The location and relatively small scale of the proposal mean that the new wharf will have minimal additional impact and limited visibility.

17. The main public location from which the proposal may be seen is from the elevated location of Bluff Hill Domain. The two visual simulations (VP1 and VP2) from this elevated public viewpoint demonstrate the small relative scale and limited visibility of the wharf extension. The main element of any such view will be the sporadic presence of a ship aligned along the east/west axis of the wharf. People in elevated properties on Bluff Hill will experience a similar negligible impact as a result of the proposal.
18. Therefore, even in more elevated public views on Bluff Hill in and around the Domain, where the potential to see the proposal is greatest, the wharf is of a small scale and consistent with the established presence of the Port. It is also undoubtedly the case that for some people who visit Bluff Hill the Port forms an attraction and point of active visual interest not only due to its ships but to the activity within the Port and its industrial scale and character.
19. For residential viewers within the elevated catchment of Bluff Hill, who have a more frequent and static locational viewpoint, the change in the Port area resulting from the new wharf and potential ships at berth on a new alignment, I consider that there will be a minor to negligible visual effect, consistent with the existing presence of the Port which is both long established and has comprised a container terminal since 1978.
20. For viewers both in the public realm or in residential properties on the flat such as on Breakwater Road at the toe of Bluff Hill or further around to Perfume Point the proposed new wharf, as illustrated in VP3, will be out of view. The only change in the view will result from a new location and orientation for ships berthed in the Port. This change is not considered to generate an adverse visual effect.
21. Similarly, for users of the popular small swimming beach adjacent to the Port reclamation it is considered that no change will be perceived, and no visual effect generated.
22. In relation to water based public viewpoints, the Port already comprises a significant element at the landward edge of the Bay, with Bluff Hill providing a strong physical containment

and backdrop to the flatter profile of the Port. Views toward the coastline encounter a modified urban environment dominated by residential housing and larger scale development including the Port seen within this existing urban context and modified coastline. From both nearby and further away, the proposed new wharf will be consistent with this existing character of the environment. It will not create a significant change and it is considered that no adverse visual effects will be generated.

23. In respect of views from the air (given the proximity of the airport and associated flight paths) the proposed new wharf will be of negligible impact and will not noticeably increase the scale of the Port and its activities will remain consistent.
24. In terms of the natural character of the coastal environment, and its landscape character and values, the proposed wharf extension comprises a small-scale change contained within the confines of the established Port. The landscape and natural character of this part of the coastal environment is already highly modified with both the landward shoreline and Port area comprising reclaimed land.
25. The proposal is not incongruous with the established patterns, elements or processes already well established in this coastal locality. It is consistent with that established environment and once constructed will tie in with the now long-established nature of the modified natural environment of the Port.
26. Any associated water discolouration from the proposed dredging will be temporary and not inconsistent with natural discolouration experienced at times at local river mouths as they naturally discharge into Hawke Bay particularly during a high rainfall event in the headwaters.
27. I have addressed matters of natural character (s6 RMA) and amenity (s7 RMA) in my original assessment and above. I note that the Port is an already highly modified environment and that the proposals have been designed to avoid impacts on the important landscape feature of Pania Reef. The AEE and evidence of planner Sylvia Allan provides a full assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions of the Regional Policy Statement and the Regional Coastal Environment Plan. I defer to her analysis whilst also agreeing with her assessment of the provisions relevant to my area of expertise.

## **RESPONSE TO MATTERS RAISED IN SECTION 42A REPORT**

28. I have reviewed the Council's s42A report issued on 31 July 2018. Matters related to Landscape and Natural Character are addressed primarily under Section 7, Environmental Effects; Effects on Natural Character and Landscapes, pages 43 to 45. The Council's planner accepts as 'appropriate' the conclusions of my assessment. I endorse the recommendation to grant consent.

## **RESPONSE TO MATTERS RAISED IN SUBMISSIONS**

29. No submitters have raised matters related to adverse landscape or visual effects resulting from the proposal.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

30. In conclusion therefore, it is considered that the proposed new wharf, associated lighting and crane structures and including any associated ship at berth alongside, will not generate more than a minor adverse visual effect for viewers in either public or private residential viewing locations. For the most part the proposal is considered to be negligible in its visual effects.
31. The proposal expands the existing port landuse / activity to a very small extent which does not change the overall impact or scale of the Port in the landscape. Visually the proposal is consistent with the established visual character and amenity of the visual environment.
32. In terms of the natural character of the coastal environment and its landscape character and values the proposed new wharf represents a proportionally very small additional area within an environment that is already highly modified and industrial in character.
33. The effects of dredging are also considered minor both in terms of landscape / natural character or visual effects with temporary discolouration associated with sediment release to the disposal area and limited modification to the sea bed over a short distance in close proximity to the already highly modified Port.

34. I note that there are no proposed conditions related to matters on landscape and, given the nature of the proposal, I consider none to be required.

**RACHEL VIRGINIA DE LAMBERT**

2 August 2018