

What are the likely impacts of the disposal of the dredged material?

Most of the material (over 90%) will fall to the sea bed within the designated disposal site. The remainder of the material will drift outside the disposal site area and be deposited on the seabed close to the disposal site.

POAL has commissioned a full impact assessment of the proposal which will be made publicly available.

What impact will there be on fishing and fisheries?

There is not expected to be any impact on fish stocks. There is limited commercial fishing effort in the dump site and it is not a popular recreational fishing area.

What other options have been considered?

In 1993, POAL established a Disposal Options Advisory Group (DOAG) to look at options for the disposal of dredged material. The group included representatives from iwi, government agencies and interest groups. The group considered a range of options in three categories:

1. Harbour edge disposal including reclamation, beach nourishment, habitat enhancement and/or creation;
2. Land disposal including landfills, monofills, commercial and industrial applications such as mudcrete for foundations or fill material and the recreation of original landscapes at a number of coastal locations; and
3. Sea disposal including disposal in dispersive and non-dispersive locations as well as disposal at shallow and deep sites.

The DOAG process reviewed the economic and environmental costs and benefits of each option. Public input was sought on the most promising options and to identify any alternatives that the Group had not thought of. The Group recommended land reclamation followed by sea disposal in waters greater than 100m depth.

POAL has reviewed the DOAG findings to assess their relevance today, and concluded that, in the absence of reclamation, deep sea disposal remains the most environmentally and economically sustainable option.

What input can stakeholders have in the consent process?

The disposal of dredged material in the EEZ is regulated by the EPA. The EPA must serve a copy of the consent application on iwi authorities, customary marine title groups, or protected customary rights groups that it considers to be affected by the application. The EPA may also serve a copy of the application on certain other groups (Ministers with responsibilities that may be affected by the activity, Maritime New Zealand, other persons having an existing interest that may be affected, and regional councils whose regions may be affected by the application) if the EPA considers it appropriate to do so. All these groups can give feedback via the EPA.

POAL wants to be open and transparent about this application. In addition to the statutory requirements, we are informing a wide range of stakeholders and welcome feedback on the proposal.

What is the timeline for the application?

1. September 2017 – June 2018: Technical / data research
2. July – August 2018: Stakeholder engagement
3. Beginning September 2018: Submission of formal marine consent application to EPA.

How can I get more information?

Further information on the marine consenting process can be obtained from the EPA website http://www.epa.govt.nz/EEZ/undertake_activity/Pages/default.aspx.

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Disposal of Dredged Material

Ports of Auckland Application to the
Environmental Protection Agency

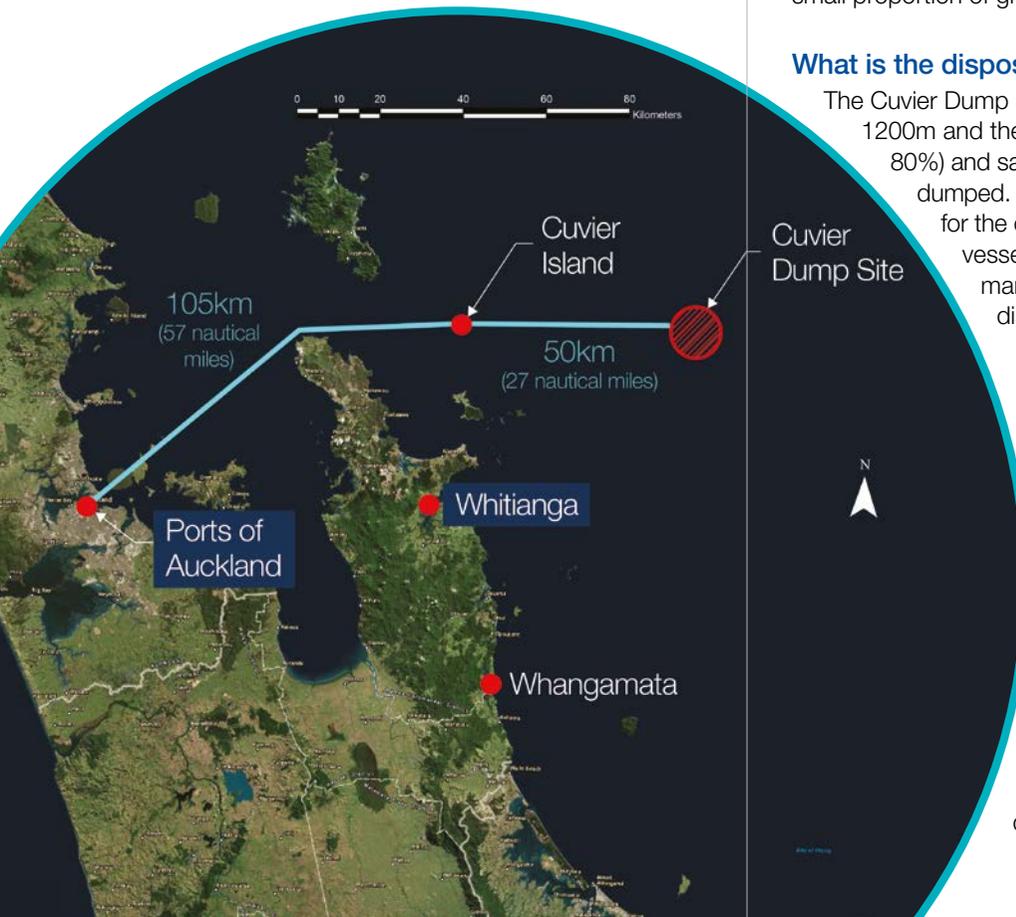
June 2018

Like all ports, Ports of Auckland (POAL) needs to dredge its channel and berths so ships can get in and out of port safely.

At the moment, material dredged out of the harbour is mixed with cement to create mudcrete, which is used for reclamation. But soon our reclamation project will end and we will need a new way to dispose of dredged material.

POAL intends to apply to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a 35-year consent to dispose of dredged material at sea under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 (EEZ Act).

The authorised "Cuvier Dump Site" location 27 nautical miles east of Cuvier Island



Why does POAL need to dispose of dredged material at sea?

Ports of Auckland has nearly finished the Fergusson Container Terminal Expansion Project, which currently takes all dredged material for use in reclamation. As POAL has given an undertaking to the Auckland community to end reclamation in the Waitematā Harbour after this project, a new way of disposing of dredged material must be found.

Where is POAL's preferred sea disposal option?

There are five "authorised disposal locations" around New Zealand designated by the EPA as being suitable for the disposal of dredged material. The closest site to Auckland is the Cuvier Dump Site located 27 nautical miles east of Cuvier Island.

What does the dredged material consist of?

The material is mostly marine muds (made up of 40% clay, 40% silt and 20% sand) and weathered mudstones, with a small proportion of gritstones and sandstones.

What is the disposal site like?

The Cuvier Dump Site ranges in depth from 500m to over 1200m and the seabed is likely to be primarily mud (60-80%) and sand (20-40%), similar to the material being dumped. Since World War II the site has been used for the disposal of ammunition, decommissioned vessels, and dredged material from Auckland marinas. POAL used the Dump Site for the disposal of dredged material in the 1990s.

Information on the ecology of the disposal area is limited because of its isolation and depth.

How much dredged material will be disposed of at sea?

Over the 35 year life of the consent, POAL expects to need to dispose of around 2 million cubic metres (m³) of material. This will be made up of about 50,000m³ of sediment every two years from maintenance dredging, and approximately 1.35 million cubic metres of material from channel and berth deepening to accommodate larger ships.



Mechanical Dredging and Split-Bottom Carrier Barge

Maintenance dredging is generally carried out over a three-to-six month period every two years. Capital dredging to deepen berths and the channel is carried out from time to time as needed.

How will the material be dredged out and disposed of?

Due to the type of sea bed material around Auckland, all dredging can be done using a barge-mounted excavator. The material is then loaded on a split-bottom barge and towed to site. The bottom of the barge is then opened and the material descends to the sea floor.

How environmentally safe is the material that will be disposed of?

Most of the material to be disposed of is unmodified sea bed and therefore very low risk. To be absolutely sure it is safe to be disposed of at sea, POAL has undertaken extensive testing for contaminants, toxicity to marine organisms, and for the potential to transfer biosecurity risks to the deeper water disposal habitat, in accordance with the requirements of the EPA. This work will establish the safe limits for material to be disposed of at the site. Any material deemed not-suitable for disposal at sea will be removed to landfill.