

Ports of Auckland development – fact sheet

Wharf extensions

What are we doing and why?

The port has gone through a period of major change. We have undergone a transformation since 2011. We have put two container terminals into one and Bledisloe Terminal is now ‘multi-purpose’. We have improved our processes and the way we work, significantly lifting productivity. We are now the best performing container port in Australasia.

We are lot more efficient but we are also much busier. Non-containerised cargo has doubled in the last five years and container freight is up 11.6% to nearly 1 million TEU (1 TEU = one 20 foot container). At the same time ships have got bigger. Since 2008 the median sized container ship is up from 1,900 TEU to 2,800TEU. Cruise, vehicle and general cargo ships are also bigger.

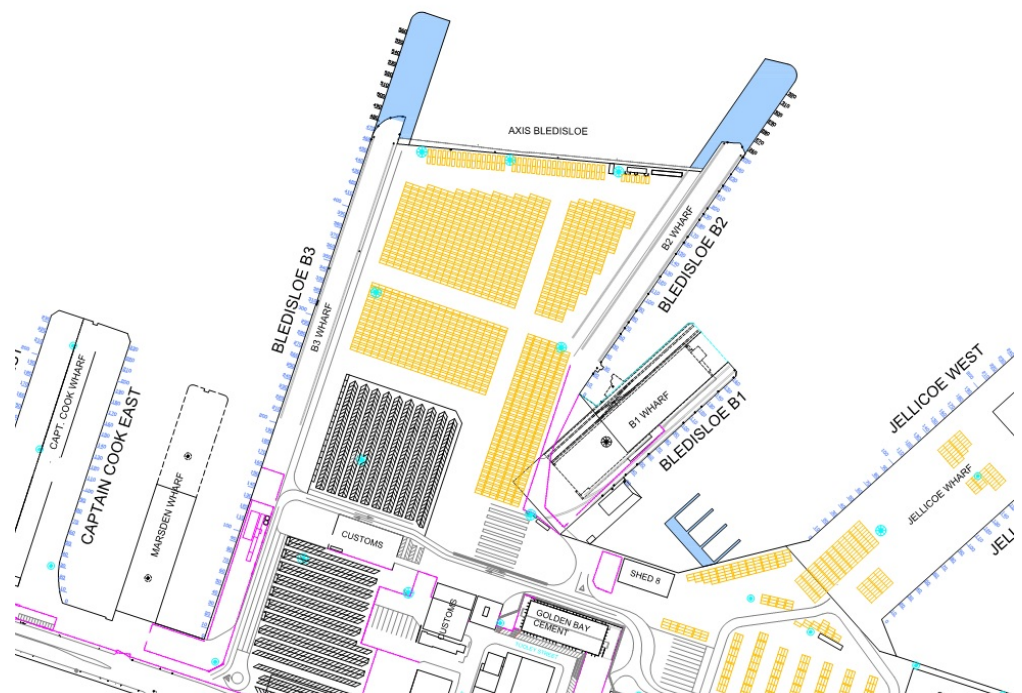
Because of this and because parts of the port were built for a different era of shipping, we don’t have enough berth space. That is why we sought consent to build two wharf extensions on Bledisloe terminal.

What are the berth extensions?

We have consent for two concrete piled wharves. A 98 metre extension to Bledisloe east wharf (‘B2’) and a 92 metre extension to Bledisloe west wharf (‘B3’).

Why are you extending B2 and B3?

B2 is hardly used because it is too short. B3 is under-used for the same reason. This is a waste, especially when we urgently need more berth space. With extensions we can turn both these wharves into very useful assets.



What is the impact of bigger / more ships?

Cruise ships have got wider, so now when there is a cruise ship at Queen’s wharf there isn’t enough room to safely berth a cargo ship at Captain Cook wharf. B2 and B3 will be able to take these ships.

B3 is the overflow berth for our container terminal, but many container ships are too long for B3, limiting its usefulness. The extension will fix this and enable us to berth longer multi cargo (general cargo) ships there as well.

In 2016 Jellicoe wharf (where we berth the *Queen Mary II*) will become much busier with the arrival of larger new cement ships. Jellicoe serves the vital Pacific Island trade and some of these ships will be able to move to B2 and B3. The extended B3 will also be able to accommodate *Queen Mary II*.

What impact will these extensions have on the harbour and harbour users?

Few vessels use that section of water because it is outside the main traffic route. As piled structures the extensions will have almost no effect on tidal currents.

Do these structures narrow the harbour?

No. The narrowest point is 889 metres between Fergusson Terminal and the Navy wharf. The distance between the Bledisloe extensions and the nearest land or structures are 1070m & 1000m.



How does what you are proposing now compare with your plans in 2011?

In 2011 we were proposing a 250 metres extension north into the harbour. The current proposal is 60% shorter at 92m and 98 m.

Reclamation

What plans do you have for reclamation?

We don't have consent for reclamation, but in time we want to apply for consent to reclaim an area of just under three hectares between the extensions to allow room for freight handling. We have not applied for consent and will not do so until after the Auckland Unitary Plan becomes operative. We recognise there will be strong public interest and there would be extensive prior consultation before making any application. If an application proceeds then it should be publicly notified.

What are the current rules on reclamation?

Reclamation is currently a discretionary activity under the operative plan in the Port Precinct and in



other waterfront areas, as it has been for many years. Just prior to notification of the unitary plan that was changed to non-complying in the Port Precinct (but still discretionary elsewhere in the waterfront), making Auckland port unique in New Zealand: all other ports have reclamation zoned as a 'discretionary' activity or better. This non-complying zoning will remain in place until the Unitary Plan becomes operative.

Auckland Council's current position with regard to the Unitary Plan supports a zoning which leaves the outer port precinct 'non-complying' and the inner area 'discretionary'. This is shown in the image (left). The green is non-complying, purple is

'discretionary' and blue is 'restricted discretionary' for reclamation under 0.6 ha.

Can the port reclaim 20 hectares into the harbour, as of right, over the next century?

No. This claim was made by the NZ Herald but it is not true. Under the proposed changes, if they were approved under the unitary plan processes, we could apply for a notified consent to undertake small scale (<0.6 ha) works and repairs in the blue area shown above. This must not amount to more than 2 hectares over 10 years. We cannot extend north and we would not use this provision to fill in the inner port basins – we need them to berth ships.

How does what you are proposing now compare with your plans in 2011?

In 2011 the port was proposing a 23 hectare reclamation; the current proposal (if we were to pursue that following consultation) is 90% smaller.

Some other frequently asked questions

Can you delay the start of work on the extensions?

No. The construction contract was let several weeks ago, and demolition and enabling work has already commenced. Material for the extension has been ordered and is on its way, and workers have been mobilised.

Longer term, if the extensions were not built, we would have to start turning cruise and freight ships away, at a significant loss to the Auckland and NZ economy. For example freight growth will stop us using Jellicoe wharf for longer cruise ships like the *Queen Mary II* and there is nowhere else on the waterfront available. An extended B3 could be used as an interim location until a dedicated cruise berth can be built. If B3 is not built, then longer cruise ships will not visit New Zealand, a significant loss to the economy.

Why do you need more land for a car park? Can't you move the cars off the wharf more quickly?

We can get 2000 cars in one ship and over 10,000 in a week, so moving them off wharf is a big job. But it is done as fast as possible. The car transporter industry has capacity to move up to 800 cars a day and on average a car stays on port for just two days.

What will be the impact on tidal flow?

The wharf extensions will have almost no impact, as the water will just flow underneath them. The impact of reclamation on the tide will be determined at the time of the resource consent application, but is likely to be minimal as the reclamation does not extend into the main channel.

Will you need to extend further in the future?

No. We will not be applying to extend further than the proposed 92/98 metre extensions.

Why can't you just use another port for the extra freight, like Northport or Tauranga?

Lots of reasons. Moving Auckland freight through far away ports will put more trucks on the roads, increase costs for consumers and exporters, and increase carbon emissions. There would be huge infrastructure costs to build a rail line to Northport, upgrade roads and enlarge the Kaimai tunnel. Both ports serve regions with their own growing freight needs and can't take Auckland's growth too. The Upper North Island needs all three of its ports to grow to handle future freight needs. Both ports but particularly Northport have constraints on how much additional berth space they can build. Expanding in either location would have significant environmental impacts.

The simple fact is there is no simple solution.

Why don't you get more efficient instead of gobbling up more harbour?

We already have. When reclamation was first debated in 2011 we were one of the worst performing container ports in New Zealand. Now we are the fastest container terminal in Australasia. Our import dwell times are world class; freight stays on our wharves for a very short time. This lift in efficiency is why we have been able to reduce our reclamation needs by 90%. But you can't berth a big ship on a short wharf and efficiency doesn't make wharves longer.