

## Port of Tauranga lodges ministerial referral application for fast-track consideration

Port of Tauranga Limited (NZX:POT) today requested that its Stella Passage development resource consent application be referred by the Minister for Infrastructure to the fast-track consenting process.

The application is the same as the one lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority in April this year as a “listed project” under schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024.

The new application will run in parallel with the Port’s listed project application, which has been delayed following a judicial review by the High Court. In a decision issued on 27 August, the Court determined that the Environmental Protection Authority should not have accepted the application as the project was not exactly as described in schedule 2 of the Act. An expert panel to examine the application had been due to start work on 1 September but was put on hold pending further direction from the Court.

Port of Tauranga Chief Executive, Leonard Sampson, said the company had been assured that the mistake in the schedule 2 description was a legislative drafting error.

“We’re very grateful for the support from Ministry for the Environment officials and Government Ministers to resolve the situation. The Stella Passage resource consent application has always included the Sulphur Point and Mount Maunganui wharves,” said Mr Sampson.

“Ministers are hopeful of amending the legislation by the end of the year. However, if this proves impossible, we hope to avoid further delays by having an alternative, direct referral application already under way.”

“We want to expedite the application as quickly as possible. We are currently turning away shipping services that want to call at Tauranga, which is negatively impacting the New Zealand economy.”



The Environment Court has already established that the environmental impact from the Stella Passage development will, from a Western science perspective, be minor in the short-term and negligible in the long-term. However, Port of Tauranga has been unable to reach agreement with opposing iwi and hapū parties on the appropriate level of mitigation for the cultural impacts of the development.

The Stella Passage development is one of regional and national significance and involves extending the Sulphur Point container berth by 385 metres (in two stages) and the Mount Maunganui wharves by 315 metres, by converting existing cargo storage land within the port's current footprint. The project also involves associated dredging for the necessary vessel turning circle along with minor reclamation of land directly behind the new wharves.

**For more information, please contact:**

**Rochelle Lockley**

**GM Communications**

**021 865 884**

**Email [rochelle.lockley@port-tauranga.co.nz](mailto:rochelle.lockley@port-tauranga.co.nz)**



**Port of Tauranga**

Connecting New Zealand and the World