

2 March 2022

Expert Consenting Panel
Kōpū Marine Precinct
Environmental Protection Agency

By e-mail: kopu.fasttrack@epa.govt.nz

Dear Panel,

RE: KŌPŪ MARINE PRECINCT – DRAFT CONDITION COMMENTS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft conditions, circulated with Minute 6, on the 24th February 2022.

The project team is in support of the draft conditions, with the exception of Condition B10, relating to water quality monitoring. We have requested that Dr Pete Wilson, Principal Coastal and Water Quality Scientist, 4Sight Consulting, provide comment on this condition. His comments are replicated below:

- *In my view the condition is unnecessary as the lower Waihou has known elevated levels of suspended solids and the ecological assessment concluded that the effects of the construction on water quality are considered to be low and most likely negligible (p19 original report).*
- *The collection of samples would have to be conducted from a boat – the banks of the Waihou are extremely muddy and can be dangerous to access by foot, if possible at all. This results in an unnecessary cost to the Consent Holder.*

However, if the panel wishes to retain the condition, in my view it requires refining, for the following reasons:

- *This is a tidal river estuary, so the concepts of ‘upstream’ and ‘downstream’ are not appropriate. The direction of flow is dependent on the state of the tide. Around slack tide (changing from high to low, or vice versa) there will be very little water flow and so I don’t consider it appropriate to apply this standard during these times.*
- *The wording is not particularly clear on how much sediment the construction can generate. There is an exception to the standard if the Waihou River already exceeds 80 g/m³ TSS, which is possible at this location, however, there doesn’t appear to be consideration if the TSS concentration is 79 g/m³. In this scenario, the activity could only increase the TSS concentration by 1 g/m³, which I don’t consider appropriate.*

Alternative suggested wording is as follows:

Total suspended solids concentrations in the Waihou River shall not be increased by any more than 50 g/m³ from background levels as a result of the exercise of this consent. The point at which compliance with this standard shall be measured is after reasonable mixing has occurred which in any instance does not exceed 200 metres from the point of discharge. This standard does not apply within 1 hour either side of low or high tide.

Advice Note: *When assessing compliance with condition B10, a minimum of three water samples should be collected: (a) up-current and unaffected by the activities authorised by this consent; (b) the point source discharge from the activities authorised by this consent; and (c) down-current after reasonable mixing.*

We respectfully request that the above comments are taken into account when finalising draft conditions.

Kind Regards,



Christina Walker
Principal Planner
4Sight Consulting Ltd