

Witness Statement Cynthia Matthews

Opua resident - neighbour to Colenso Triangle ( Rotopouri) & near neighbour to proposed Opua Marine Business Park site & Opua Commercial Estate

**Re: FNHL's Submission #320 to the Far North**

**District's Proposed District Plan [ PDP] (2022)**

OMBP = proposed Opua Marine Business Park "the Park"

CT = Colenso Triangle

OCE= Opua Commercial Estate

FNHL = Far North Holdings Limited

MUZ = mixed use zoning

FNDC = Far North District Council

NRC = Northland Regional Council

I recommend that a review of the FNHL 320 submission requesting zone change for the OMDA, CT, OCE and OMBP sites to MUZ with zone changes revised, specifically regarding the site for the proposed OMBP. I ask that the FNHL request here be rejected pending re evaluation of its present zoning.

The special character of the OMBP area is overlooked while significant risks to the ecology and human population are not adequately assessed. The effects will be significant. The imposition of a marine light industrial park with built form and impermeable surfaces covering a land form that is predominantly a natural drainage system would have permanent ramifications for the land and its neighbours.

Lot 12 DP2002225 comprises 4.84 hectares. of natural vegetation tree and wetland at Rotopouri ( historical name of locality ). It is part of a larger ecological coastal system of high natural value containing both estuarine salt marsh and raupo tracts. The proposed site is the habitat of threatened and uncommon endemic species including bittern, kiwi at forest margins, spoonbills, heron and shag species. The creek sustains kokupu.

There has been a lack of local public consultation regarding this development (OMBP) at this site. The existing NRC resource consent for fill was non notified and was not known by the local community including immediate neighbours

The bundling of four disparate FNHL landholdings into one urban entity with a uniform zoning - MUZ - dismisses the very different existing and proposed usages of these properties. It denies the ecological values of wetland at the proposed OMBP location. This should have prompted a considered expert evaluation referencing the environment protection and enhancement objectives of the PDP.

The proposed staging of developments in the four FNHL land holdings along with lack of public consultation diminishes the opportunity for more detailed consideration provided by resource consents that are more specific to each site. Staging also discourages community contribution as to how its members can share an overall vision of Opuia going into the future.

A site visit and forensic knowledge of the proposed OMBP site would confirm that this is a naturally draining system for the Oromahoe ridge (bordering the Opuia forest) extending east with the wetland fed through a creek and the freshwater springs at the Opuia hill.

It's unclear in the FNHL submission regarding the proportion of dwellings to buildings designated for light marine industry purposes. Noise, light spill and vehicle use by residents over extended hours will eradicate natural character for both workers and residents at the Park and contribute to a higher risk of air pollution to adjoining properties. The OMBP site is flanked by hills on three sides and is open to the river and estuarine systems facing the coast.

The requested zone change (from Rural Living) to MUZ included building height exemptions for both the OMBP and CT. At the proposed OMBP this could mean a building height of 12m which would give rise to a disconnect with the natural environment surrounding the proposed development by residents of the proposed Opuia Close, workers and visitors. The scale of built form in relation to the immediate surrounding flat contour would be intrusive.

The infrastructure challenges specific to this site require a detailed cost benefit analysis that is absent in the FNHL submission.

The approval of the FNHL submission re the development of the OMBP rests on a presumption that existing water supply and communications and power can be extended to the site. It is not demonstrated how this will be implemented (re permanent and effective installation) and does not explain how the FNDC can afford the costs of this provision to this site. (Example - nationally there will be a deficit in necessary water infrastructure of over NZ \$120 185 billion in the next 30 years. The Far North District Council is already dealing with ageing water infrastructure issues) There are added costs of onsite sprinkler systems and the pumping of waste water on site, the latter until there is an adequate connection to the existing infrastructure. The suggestion of initially privately funded infrastructure is speculative. Dealing with waste water at the Park increases the risk of contagion to the neighbouring high value estuarine systems while the envisaged storm water detention pond close to SH11 increases the risk of contamination by marine industrial activities through to the Kawakawa river. The imposition of a proposed sea wall recognises this potential for contamination and its containment, but there is little consideration of mitigation. The potential future flooding from

the river estuarine systems into the OMBP site due to climate change and extreme weather events are not given due consideration. The present floodgate at the location should not be considered sufficient for any 'future proofing' in this respect.

A change in zoning at the OMBP site to MUZ presents traffic management issues.. Initially there doesn't appear to be confirmation from the NZTA that there is sufficient planned capacity here to accommodate the projected increase in traffic. The development of the Colenso Triangle (CT) directly across SH 11 means a range of commercial and private vehicle, boats and trailers trucks cycles and ebikes , buses and possibly scooters would require entrance exit from within a 500m length of SH11 to order to access rail station, light industrial park, residential apartments ( 'Opua Close') and the existing residential areas at Beaufort Street. From this same 500m of state highway the sight line for the entrance to the OCE is absent when travelling south. The OCE entrance would be within 200m of the proposed Park entry. (There appears to be an absence of provision for public transport here.). This intensification of traffic at the locality would remove the present natural ambience of this environ.

There is no detailed analysis of possible alternatives to the proposed OMBP. The present capacity of the OCE ( it has not been 100% occupied for some time) has not been fully addressed. Its projected capacity through redevelopment towards fulfilling requirements for more light marine industry premises remains unclear.

The proposed OMBP should be removed from the suit of FNHL land holding rezoning requests, specifically the change from RLZ to MUZ. The ecological values of the wetland at the OMBP, the potential mitigation costs from developing in a high natural risk environment along with inadequate realisation of infrastructure costs warrant a separate review and reconsideration of its zoning. Ratifying protection and preservation of the Rotopouri wetland might then be procured.

Cynthia Matthews