

BEFORE THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Port Otago Limited Applications
2010.198 and 2010.194

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF SARAH CATHERINE VALK

Introduction and Experience

1. My name is Sarah Catherine Valk.
2. I hold a Bachelor of Science majoring in Geography and a Postgraduate Diploma in Science (with Credit in Environmental Science).

Scope of Evidence

3. I assisted in the preparation of Teone Taiaroa's submission and am here to today to present evidence in conjunction with Teone.
4. My evidence focuses on the Recommending Report.
5. Teone will present evidence in regard to the matters raised in his submission from a practical perspective.

Context

6. Firstly I would like to provide some context about the commercial fishing industry.
7. Teone is what is known as a day fisherman. His average fishing day begins at around 5.30 am and ends around 8.00pm. Days of the week don't matter in the fishing industry and Teone has to fish whenever the weather permits.
8. There is common public misperception about income made from fishing due largely to the high cost of buying fresh fish. Flat fish (for example flounder and sole) sells for approximately \$20 - \$25 per kilogram.
9. Fisherman, who bear the costs of catching the fish and all the risks associated with the industry (including economic and physical) get paid approximately \$3 - \$5 per kilogram for flat fish.

10. Fisherman have to bear the costs of maintaining a boat and catching the fish which includes diesel, boat maintenance and repairs, surveys, crew wages and G.S.T.
11. The high costs involved with the industry allow little room for movement in regard to a decrease in productivity, and any such decrease has high potential to make commercial fishing an unviable career.

Transference of Costs

12. Proposed disposal site AO has been chosen, amongst other reasons, because of the close proximity to Otago Harbour. This proximity reduces the time and cost of disposing of dredged material as well as avoidance of adverse offshore weather conditions.
13. By disposing of dredged material at disposal site AO, fisherman will have to travel further afield to fish. This will add time and both financial and personal costs to those fisherman that travel further afield to fish.
14. Personal costs included increased time at sea and therefore away from family and friends. Financial costs include increased fuel costs and potential decreased catches.
15. I note that the ability to move fishing grounds for some fisherman is not an option and will make their businesses unviable and they will be forced out of the industry.

Recommending Report

16. Paragraph 86 states that the economic impacts on commercial fishing were considered in the disposal of dredged material. I am of the opinion that the economic impacts on commercial fishing have been grossly underestimated.
17. Paragraphs 89, 363 and 364 state that determining proposed disposal site A0 involved extensive consultation with potential affected stakeholders to determine areas and effects of interest, and the consideration of avoiding significant effects of fishing.

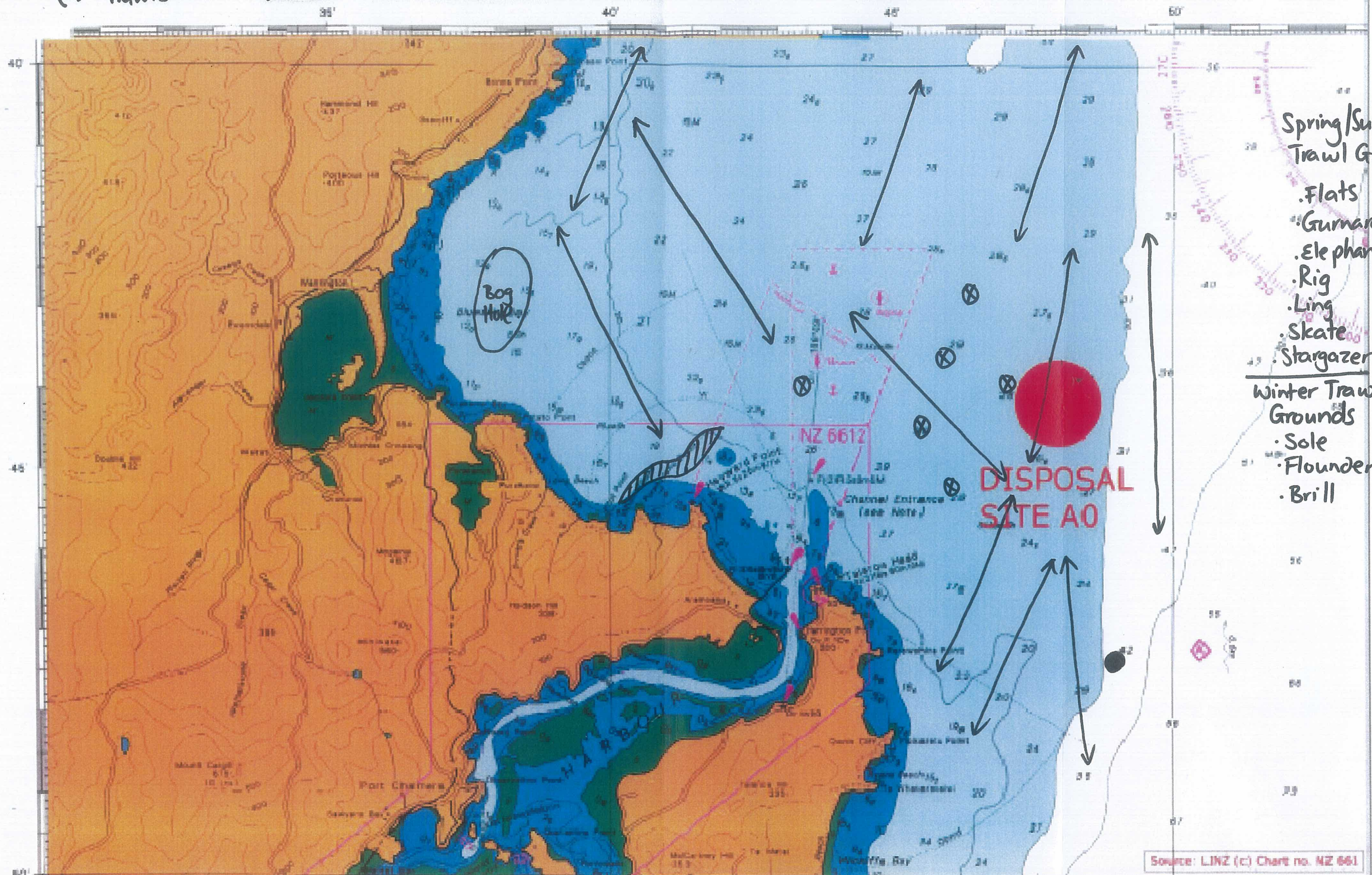
18. Teone is a directly affected party and has not been consulted. As a result it is considered that the areas of interest to commercial fisherman and effects on commercial fisherman have not been sufficiently identified, considered, avoided or mitigated.
19. There is a brief summary of commercial fisherman's concerns at paragraph 265. I consider that the recommending report has not adequately addressed the concerns of commercial fisherman.
20. Paragraph 362 clearly states that using disposal site A0 will result in the death of all benthic plants and animals in the immediate disposal area and that recovery could take over a year. Paragraph 521 states that impacts are expected for a few years. This is a more than minor adverse effect and as such is considered contradictory to the determination made in paragraph 399 that effects on commercial fishing will be no more than minor.
21. Paragraph 362 is also contradictory to paragraphs 439 and 521 which state that biota is expected to recover rapidly and the disposal of dredge material will have potential short and medium term effects respectively.
22. Paragraph 366 states that modelling determined that the area of disposal site A0 would have the least impact on a range of activities including commercial fishing. I am concerned that local practical knowledge and experience was not appropriately taken into consideration.
23. It is noted in paragraph 387 that sensitive or rare species or communities were identified in the area of disposal site A0. I therefore disagree that the effects will be no more than minor.
24. Although paragraph 396 notes commercial fishing is widely distributed depending on a number of factors, Teone's fishing efforts are located around proposed disposal site A0.
25. Paragraph 397 states that commercial fishing may be impacted by the disposal of dredged material and is therefore contradictory to previous paragraphs which note that there will be adverse effects.

26. I disagree with paragraph 399 as it is considered that the effects on commercial fishing will be more than minor.
27. In relation to paragraphs 428 and 429 I disagree that the application is consistent with Section 5(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991 as the adverse effects of the proposal on commercial fishing have not be avoided, remedied or mitigated.
28. Also, I consider that the draft consent conditions, specifically regarding monitoring, are insufficient and ambiguous.

Conclusion

29. Teone will be directly adversely affected by this proposal.
30. Teone is not opposed to the proposal as a whole, only the adverse effects as a result of the disposal of dredged material at proposed site A0.
31. Various documents produced for this proposal acknowledge that there will adverse effects on fish resources as a result of the disposal of dredged material. There is a lack of certainty regarding the effects and how long recovery will take.
32. The recommending report is contradictory. It states in several places that there will be adverse effects on commercial fishing, however the report concludes that effects on commercial fishing will be no more than minor.
33. I consider that the adverse effects are going to be more than minor in relation to Teone's business and have not been avoided, remedied or mitigated.
34. Teone is seeking mitigation of the adverse effects on his commercial fishing business in the form of financial compensation.

- ⊗ Hook-ups
- Natural sand bank
- ↔ Trawls
-  New sand bar



- Spring/Summer Trawl Grounds
- . Flats
 - . Gurnard
 - . Elephant
 - . Rig
 - . Ling
 - . Skate
 - . Stargazer
- Winter Trawl Grounds
- . Sole
 - . Flounder
 - . Brill

Source: LINZ (c) Chart no. NZ 661

DESIGNED: ACP	DATE: 06/10/09	PLAT DATE: 04/05/2010	SCALE: 1:40,000 (A1)
DRAWN: ACP	06/10/09		1:80,000 (A3)
CHECKED: LMC	02/03/10	ISSUE DATE: 11/02/2010	
APPROVED: LMC	02/03/10		

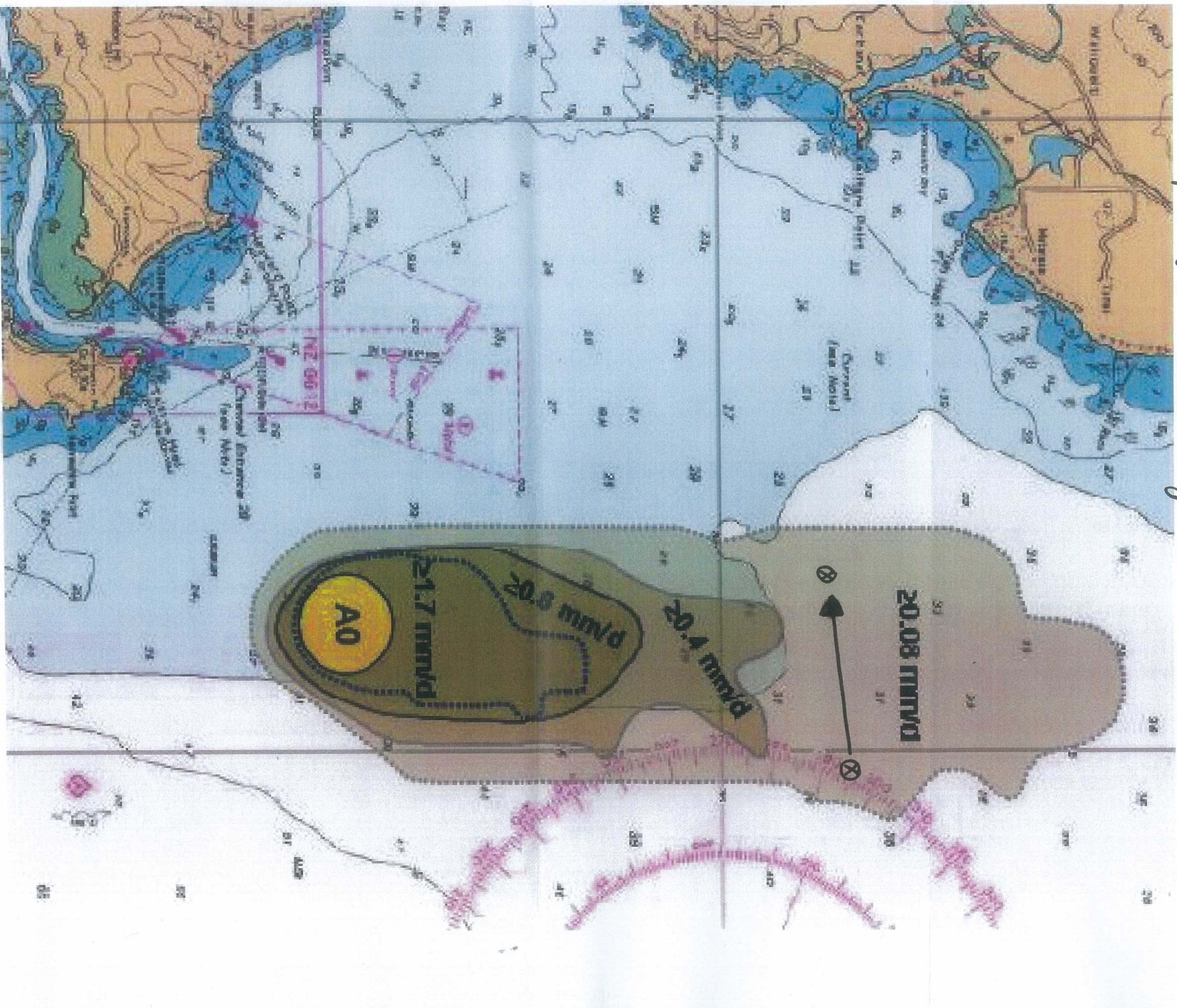
PORT OTAGO LTD P.O. Box 8, Port Chalmers, N.Z.

Project Next Generation
Proposed Offshore Disposal Site A0



400 FILE NAME: Project Next\11142
 040 No: 17.11142

Movement of old steel tank over 5 years





NGĀI TAHU SEAFOOD

12 April 2011

PORT OTAGO

Dredging of Otago Harbour – Impact on Ngāi Tahu Fishers

Kia ora,

INTRODUCTION

The Otago Regional Council have invited submissions in respect to the proposed dredging of Otago Harbour, which will involve disturbing and removing up to 7.2 million cubic metres of dredge material, which will be disposed at various sites adjoining Taiaroa Heads.

This submission is written on behalf of Ngāi Tahu Seafood (NTS), in support of two Ngai Tahu fishers / whānau who have significant concerns as to how the proposed dredging of the harbour, and disposal of sediment will impact on their fishing operations, and their ability to fish iwi quota that supports the broad objectives of NTS and our shareholder (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu).

This submission only addresses the potential impact on their fishing operations and does not, for instance, address the various other concerns NTS feels that this activity may have on pāua stocks and cockle beds.

We wish to submit the following:

BACKGROUND

The Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board established Ngāi Tahu Seafood (NTS) in 1988 following the Māori Fisheries Settlement with the Crown. Over the past 22 years, NTS has continued to invest in quota and to build scale and capacity across selected sectors within the seafood industry. NTS is owned by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (Te Rūnanga).

Te Rūnanga are now a significant quota owner in the New Zealand seafood sector. This is a sector which aligns with an intergenerational investment horizon, which requires sustainable investment that supports our distribution strategy and continues to maintain a Ngāi Tahu tribal footprint on the land and the sea.

The investment footprint of NTS in the seafood sector of Te Waipounamu means that there are approximately 48 Ngāi Tahu fishing whānau who enjoy exclusive use to iwi fishing quota. Thus use enables the development of whānau business interests, and broader support of customary and community interests.

OTAGO HARBOUR DREDGING – IMPACT ON COMMERCIAL FISHING AND IWI QUOTA

Port Otago is seeking consents to deepen the existing shipping channel to Port Chalmers. NTS do not have an issue with the proposal and accept the reasons. However, NTS do have concerns that the dredging will have a detrimental impact on the ability of two of our Ngai Tahu fishers / whānau (Neil and Michelle McDonald, and Teone Taiaroa) to catch iwi quota allocated to their respective businesses. This concern is based on the uncertainty of what impact the disposal of material will have on their fishing grounds.

The value of the quota that these two fishers are allocated is worth approximately \$3.7m. The uncertainty that surrounds the dredging of the harbour, and impact on the respective fishers businesses, places the a degree of uncertainty on the future value of this quota, and the ability for it to be caught in the fishing grounds adjoining Taiaroa Heads.

SUMMARY

NTS, in support of Neil and Michelle McDonald, and Teone Taiaroa, in relation to the proposed dredging of the Otago Harbour –

- Feels that;
 - The proposed activity will have an adverse impact on the value of iwi fishing quota;
 - Such impacts may affect the health of various fish stocks, and that Ngāi Tahu will have to bear a future cost through quota reductions; and
 - The fishing activities, and livelihoods, of our Ngāi Tahu fishers may be put at risk due to the uncertainty that surrounds this activity.

We do not wish to be heard in support of this submission, but are happy for it to be discussed in support of Neil McDonald and Teone Taiaroa.

Ngā mihi



Brett Ellison

Resource Manager

Ngāi Tahu Seafood

T Tairaroa (71)
Approximate locations of start
of trawls.

