

Next Generation Project Consultative Group

Notes from the meeting held on Monday 31 March 2008, 7pm
Port Otago Limited Building, Port Chalmers.

In Attendance: Stephen Higgs (Chair),
Bill Lloyd (Port Environment Liaison Committee)
Bruce Hill (DOC)
Cheryl Adams (Blueskin Road resident),
David O'Malley (Octa Associates Ltd),
Graeme Burns (Harrington Point Community Society),
John Perry ((Port Environment Liaison Committee),
Lincoln Coe (Port Otago),
Mark James (NIWA),
Martin Single (Shore Processes and Management Ltd),
Nicola Bould (Harbour Cycle Network),
Phil Mitchell (Mitchell Partnerships),
Selva Selvarajah (Otago Regional Council)
Tom De Pelsemaeker (Harwood Resident),
Vern Hall (Otago Yacht Club),
Warren Lewis (Recreational Fishing/boating)

Apologies: John Christie (Otago Chamber of Commerce), Joan Conway (Port Environment Liaison Committee), Geoff Plunket (Port Otago), Peter Brown (Port Otago), Rob Bell (NIWA), Steve Walker (Harbour Cycle Network), Angela McErlane (Port Environment Liaison Committee), Roy Innes (Port Environment Liaison Committee), Irene Scurr (Otago Peninsula Community Board), Brett Hastie (South Coast Board Riders), Graeme Carse (Quarry Beach Surf Boards) and Nicola Reeves (South Coast Board Riders) were confirmed.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Stephen Higgs welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the agenda, timeline and minutes from the previous meeting had been circulated.

2. Confirmation of Agenda

The agenda was confirmed with the following action items noted:

- Comments on hydrodynamic report.
- Outcome from meeting with DOC.
- Update on resource consent work.

3. Confirmation of Notes from 11 February 2008 meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of 11th February 2008 were accepted.

4. Matters arising

It was agreed to discuss any matters not dealt with in subsequent agenda items at the end of the meeting.

5. Feedback on February Presentations

Phil Mitchell requested that any technical questions on Rob Bell's report be addressed at the next meeting when Rob would be in attendance.

Bert Youngman identified a number of issues he wished to raise including the need for the current meter. Lincoln explained this was to improve the model accuracy. A meter in eastern channel Raybirds Bay and Grassy Point were required.

Bert commented that the eastern channel is a key, well-known issue with effects from earlier works, for example, shallowing of Back Beach. He noted it was pleasing to see that the eastern channel is being considered.

Bert also referred to comparison of depths since 1877 stating that differences of 1 to 2m in shallowing had occurred since then. In response to a question about how current data compared with earlier reported data, Lincoln advised that it will be a new model. The bathymetry is a key input to the model's behaviour. The main channel is logged each year and the University Survey school has also completed some areas. In late January, POL had some other areas surveyed to provide more data. This is the reason to use modern bathymetric rather than older readings. Lincoln advised that the report referred to by Bert is available. A copy will be attached to the minutes.

John Milburn asked about the hydrodynamic presentation reference to using two wind-speeds, 0 and 20 knots. Martin Single said that these were the two wind speed scenarios used in the model calibration; calm and strong winds. The need to consider a high-wind scenario was raised and it was noted that other scenarios would be tested later in the process.

The sedimentation model was also raised and Martin said that it would be checked. Sediment characteristics are an input to the hydrodynamic model and this is also a later stage of modelling. It was noted that the model will assess sedimentation from dredging and current movements.

Bruce Hill (DOC) referred to DOC comments presented to the group and it was agreed that these should be addressed now. The items raised by Bruce were:

- Item 4 notes work is required on the sediment plumes.
- Item 6 notes that wind speed can exceed 30-40 knots.
- Item 7 referred to Murdoch paper regarding the Blueskin eddy.
- Item 10 referred to the harbour e. ?????

Bert commented that some papers refer to a 5 or 6 day water retention time in the harbour. Martin thought that this could be Andersons Bay and the Boat Harbour, and John Milburn referred to dye studies undertaken in the early 1980's in the upper harbour, which showed retention was around 3 tide cycles.

6. Update on meetings since 11 February

6.1 DOC

Lincoln reported that he had met with DOC to review their submission. This clarified a number of issues and the ecology work scope was modified accordingly. More work had been undertaken about roosting and wading birds around Aramoana.

John Milburn raised an issue with sea lions noting they are increasingly attracted to human activity and that this could be an issue during dredging. Mark said that he would like to meet with John to discuss these matters.

6.2 Recreational Fisheries

Lincoln reported that he had met with Warren Lewis and Ted ???. There were discussions on set net areas and the use of rock as a habitat. Lincoln said that this needs to be considered.

The importance of the Blueskin Bay shore was also emphasised. Warren noted that the harbour is a resource and Port use has reduced access. The effect on uses and fisheries needs to be monitored.

Discussion of the mole and rock groynes followed. Warren said that the south side of the mole is a voluntary marine reserve and a well used area. It was noted that the rock groynes are good fishing and that this needs to be considered, with the groynes perhaps increased. Lincoln said that this is not part of the scope of the project but will be considered once the modelling is further advanced.

The importance of the Wellers Rock groyne and the half tide wall was raised. Lincoln said that the Wellers Rock groyne is important as it trains the ebb tide and the wall does provide a holding wall for sediment.

7. Work progress since last meeting

7.1 Wave Buoys

Lincoln tabled the proposed sign for wave buoys (used at boat ramps). The last meeting indicated the need to take wave measurements using two buoys and ORC Consent was granted two weeks ago. The proposed location was explained and the devices will be assessed after three months but this will depend on weather conditions. There is a 100m exclusion zone around the buoys. Harbour Control has the buoy GPS's and will provide a warning. Signs will be located at a number of ramps. It was also confirmed that there will be a notice to mariners. The Te Rauone buoys are ORC instruments. But they have provided consents for inner harbour buoys. Copies of these consents are available on request.

7.2 Geotechnical Investigations

An ORC consent has been given for geotechnical investigations and bore holes coring will be completed from the pile driving barge. Locations will be from Port Chalmers to Fairway beacon. This work will be undertaken over a 12 hour period. Disposal site testing will also be undertaken.

7.3 Ecology Fieldwork

Mark James referred to his December report. And noted:

- Fisheries – more consultation underway.
- Birds / Bird Behaviour – A small study has been undertaken with feeding patterns, etc examined.
- Harbour benthic surveys underway.
- Offshore benthic survey underway.

A camera survey has been completed at inner harbour sites. A full survey will be completed in May. For the offshore survey, DOC's comments have been incorporated. It is intended to complete side scan surveys in the outer harbour to characterise benthic profile. This will be sonar and ROV with camera. Sites have been picked randomly. The work will be in two phases and will be a reasonably comprehensive survey. The proposed scope of the work is attached to these notes.

Mark also advised that the bird study was concentrating on wading birds. It was noted that there are some unique bird colonies at Taiaroa Head.

Water displacement from vessels had minor effects on birds and were more of an issue for observers. It was noted that the wake from an oil tanker produced significant washes which could lead to effects on the sand banks. Lincoln referred the group to the Te Rauone Beach wave buoys. An assessment is being made of the effects of wakes.

"Significant withdrawal" of water prior to the arrival of a large ship was noted and it was agreed to seek comments on this from the observers.

8. Updated Project Timeline

Lincoln referred to the circulated timeline, which indicated the different streams of work that are being undertaken. An intensive period of data gathering will be undertaken over the next 2 to 3 months with a progressive release of information.

There will now be an increasing emphasis on channel design and dredging methodologies. Consultation will be ongoing through to consent lodgement in October. The consent application will cover dredging and disposal. The October deadline was questioned and it was noted that it was not set in concrete but was a target date and dependent on study outcomes.

It was emphasised that the community needed adequate time to consider the Assessment of Environmental Effects.

A question of ship size was raised regarding the possibility of 6000 TEU vessels being superseded by 8000 TEU ships and the harbour being deepened further. Lincoln explained the ship size parameters. 6000 TEU is the next size which requires 14.5m draft and this drives the dredge depth. To go from 6000 to 8000 TEU there is width and length to consider. The draft is similar but ship handling becomes more of an issue. Lincoln said that modelling will test both a 6000 TEU and 8000 TEU vessel.

It was suggested that newer ships had less wake. Lincoln commented that to achieve efficiencies, ship designers have been increasing vessel speeds and considering vessel shapes in an attempt to reduce vessel frictions.

Changes to the swinging basin were also queried and Lincoln advised there needed to be assessment of design for the basin too.

9. General Business

A question was raised regarding any necessary changes to the Coastal Plan. Phil and Selva advised that dredging is a permitted activity but the coastal plan will be updated as necessary to cover maintenance dredging as it needs to reflect the likely permanent activity.

Eastern harbour needs were mentioned again, particularly effects on recreational boating. Mitigation of any effects was requested.

Questions were raised regarding assessment of effects such as noise, eg. Operational or vibration. Lincoln said that, to date, focus has been on dredging but POL was starting to look at noise and traffic flows. Lincoln undertook to report back on these issues to the next meeting.

It was noted that any reports discussed by the group could be requested from Lincoln and that now the website was 'live' (since February) they could be accessed there too.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for 26 May, 2008 at 7.00pm – Port Otago Promotions Room.

11. Closure

Stephen closed the meeting at 8.35pm.