

Port Noise Liaison Committee – Public Meeting

Notes of Meeting held on 3 December 2025

Present:

Mara Wolkenhauer (Independent Chair)

Sarah Kirkland – Otago Regional Council

Port Otago

Grant Bicknell – Port Otago

Joanne Dowd – Port Otago

Brendon Shanks – Marshall Day Acoustics

Apologies:

Kevin Winders – Port Otago

Dave Cormack - Wenita Forest Products

Kent Chalmers – City Forests

Joe Cecchi – Carey’s Bay Association

Steve Duder – Port Chalmers Yacht Club

Noise Committee Members

Rachel Day - Carey’s Bay Association

Alan Worthington – Dunedin City Council

Fred Cross – Vision Port Chalmers

Mike Wheeler – Motion Health

Mike Cummings - Otago Regional Council

7 members of the public in attendance

Welcome from Meeting Chair

The Chair opened the meeting at 5.32pm and welcomed the public and the committee with a karakia to the last meeting of the year. Seven members of the community attended the meeting. The Chair took the opportunity to thank Fred Cross (Vision Port Chalmers Inc) and Kristina Goldsmith (West Harbour Community Board) (who are stepping down from the Committee) for their service. Their contribution has been invaluable. Refer to Agenda item below for further details on succession plans.

Apologies

Apologies noted above were accepted.

Minutes of previous meeting (3 September 2025)

The minutes recording the meeting on 3 September 2025 were accepted as a true and complete record of the meeting.

Moved by the Fred Cross. Seconded by Rachel Day.

Actions Schedule from Previous Meeting

Actions & Progress from the September 2025 Action List were noted including:

- Noise Fact Sheets – The noise fact sheets are now on the Port Otago website. They can be updated as and when required. Information around potential noisy vessels coming into port is proactively included on the Port Otago Facebook page. Other avenues for providing education around vessel noise is welcomed. PNLC to advise avenues to explore.
- Vessel Horns – The Harbourmaster provided information on the types of vessels that operate on the harbour and ORC Committee members confirmed that this information could be included on the ORC website.

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- Crane Horns – Marshall Day had noted that the safety horn associated with the ship to shore container cranes could be heard while they were monitoring a property. Committee had requested whether this was something that could be addressed – could the horn be replaced with flashing lights. Port Otago’s Operation Team noted that the horn is a safety device to alert workers on the ground that a container was being unloaded. A visual clue such as flashing lights would be ineffective. Port Otago to consider whether the characteristics of the horn could be changed – work in progress.
 - Recruitment of Board Chair – refer to Agenda Item below.

Registration of Interests

Committee confirmed no known conflicts.

Correspondence

No correspondence received in the previous period.

Public Issues of Concern

The Chair opened the floor to the public to raise any points of concern they wanted to discuss.

One member of the public felt that there was more rail activity in Port Chalmers and more associated rail noise and enquired was this the case and was there any reason for the increase. Grant noted that rail movements were seasonal, and volumes changes throughout the year. Not aware of any port-related reason for any increase. Fred queried whether the inland port would lead to more trucks on the road. Grant noted that it was proposed to utilise the rail network as part of the inland port. The new rail-pad within the port was stage one of providing for this growth in rail.

A member of the public noted that they wanted the remit of the Committee extended to deal with environmental issues as was the case back in 2019. Grant noted that this was addressed last year and that the remit for the PNLC was set within the Dunedin City District Plan. Grant noted that general environmental issues fall within the remit of the West Harbour Community Board and the Dunedin City Council. Both organisations liaise directly with Port Otago if there are issues that are relevant to port operations that arise.

A member of the public noted that they had stopped lodging complaints as they felt nothing was done to address the concerns. They noted that there was a vessel in on Friday evening (28 Nov) that was noisy and another on Tuesday (2 December). They expressed disappointment with Port Otago, the DCC and ORC for not doing enough to address noise, they felt there was more those organisations could do. They noted they had previously suggested to increase proactive comms on Facebook and direct email to complainants. They noted they had requested noise monitoring at their property but had been declined because their property was located outside the noise contours. They believed the noise contours should be re-evaluated.

Some members of the public noted the absence of senior leaders at these public meetings. They would appreciate it if the CEO and/or a Port Otago Board member representative would commit to attend this annual public meeting going forward or provide the community with other avenues for regular interactions (e.g. community meetings elsewhere at another time). Grant explained that Kevin was called away to attend an urgent Alpine Energy Board meeting of which he is a Director. Grant explained that he was well placed to represent Port Otago as he sat on the Ports’ Leadership Team.

Mike Cummings noted that the government was currently proposing reforms to the resource management Act/regime and that new legislation was proposed to address the future of planning and environmental law in New Zealand. Mike suggested complainants should review the new legislation when it is released for public consultation and encouraged people to make submissions.

Reports

Update from Port Otago

Grant noted that the rail-pad project was now complete and opened by ministers. It is a key part of Port Otago's 'always open' strategy. Both wharfs now back in action. The cruise season has started with the number of ships calling to Port Chalmers and Dunedin being fewer than last year and this is reflected in other ports around New Zealand. Container ships have been steady with the busy season ended in June/July.

Logs have been busy and likely will remain busy with the high level of wind-blown timber in the region.

Ravensdown still has vessels calling in, reduced to 6-8 vessels per year with the main production now undertaken elsewhere.

Port is preparing its application to fast track its proposed inland port development. This is a joint venture (JV) project with Dynes. Range of consultants assessing the proposal as part of this process and looking to formally lodge early next year.

Port Otago are investing in its marine fleet. This includes a new tug which is due in Otago in January. The port has also entered into a JV with Napier Port to build a new dredge. This is being built in Vietnam and is expected to be delivered by December next year.

Noise Reporting – Presentation from Marshall Day

Brendon from Marshall Day briefly highlighted the key points of the pre-circulated quarterly noise report. It was noted that the Current Port Noise Maps (2024) predict 67 dB Ldn (5 day) at the Cemetery and Scotia Street monitors during seasonal peak periods. Several spikes in the Ldn (1 day) were identified primarily due to noise from fire sirens, extended periods of high wind, or ships. Even with these external noise sources, the measured noise level was not above 67 dB Ldn (5 day) at either monitoring site.

In terms of bangs and crashes, it was noted that these related to noise from within the port and kiwirail. The number of bangs and crashes was consistent with the period for the year. It was noted that noise recorded in April related to construction noise on the port (rail pad-related) and the spike in July at Scotia Street related to wind.

A query from the public related to the number and location of the noise monitors. It was noted that these were positioned to address noise at certain locations, close to the port and were developed to accord with the noise contours. Having consistent locations has been useful in developing a reliable system. Marshall Day have recommended in the past not changing the noise monitoring locations.

It was noted that Port Otago is currently undertaking a noise trial utilising Sitehive equipment. The system does not offer parity in terms of the current noise system, but they are working on system improvements.

Noise Complaints

The Chair referred to the pre-circulated report on noise complaints and asked Joanne to give an overview of the report. Joanne noted that there had been 6 complaints in this quarter, 4 related to vessel noise and 2 related to operations at the D Shed. All complaints had been followed up. The

number of complaints for the quarter were at a similar level to 2024. Joanne acknowledged that, as discussed in the meeting, the community were not always lodging complaints, so the numbers could have been higher if all those complaints had been lodged.

Chair Succession

The Chair gave an update on the recruitment of a new chair. She noted that the designated recruitment Sub Committee had interviewed the shortlisted candidates. There was a preferred candidate. Given this was a public meeting, it was considered inappropriate to discuss specifics around the candidates for the role. Instead, the committee agreed to provide feedback out-of-session via email. It was agreed that the current chair would stay on for 3 more months and chair one more meeting in March 2026, with a face-to-face handover for the new chair, once appointed. The new chair will attend the March meeting as an observer.

New Committee Members

The Chair noted that two members of the committee are standing down, Kristina Goldsmith from the West Harbour Community Board and Fred Cross from Vision Port Chalmers. Port Otago will liaise with the West Harbour Community Board Chairman to discuss a replacement from their organisation.

Fred Cross noted that the organisation he represents (Vision Port Chalmers) was being wound up, and he wasn't aware of any other organisation that represented retailers in Port Chalmers. Port Otago confirmed that they would investigate how this gap would be filled.

The Chair also noted that Port Otago's D-shed operations were now under the control of Fonterra. This means Fonterra would qualify to sit on the Committee as a Port User. The representative from Fonterra is to be confirmed.

Other Business

No other business was proposed.

Next meeting, date, time, and location

Suggested dates for the 2026 Port Noise Liaison Committee meetings to be agreed with Committee Members.

Suggested dates are as follows:

- 11 March 2026; (note: this is in the second week of March, due to Chair's availability)
- 3 June 2026;
- 2 September 2026 and
- 2 December 2026 (Public Meeting)

Meeting closed 7.05pm

Actions

Meeting date	Action	Responsible	Due	Update
December 25	Committee to confirm by email acceptability of new chair candidate.	Noise Committee	Q4 2025	
December 25	Port Otago to work with West Harbour Community Board, retailers and Fonterra to identify new committee members	Joanne	Q1 2025	
December 25	Marshall Day to track progress with Sitehive development	Marshall Day	Ongoing	