

Minutes

Port Noise Liaison Committee Meeting:

Napier Port Boardroom – 1530, Wednesday 23 October 2024

1. Attendance & Apologies

The meeting was opened at 3:46pm, with Eileen von Dadelszen welcoming all attendees.

Attendance:

Committee members: Hannah Strauss (Napier Port), David Broad (Napier Port), Adam Harvey (Napier Port), Chris Lonergan (Napier Port), Craig Fitzgerald (Marshall Day Acoustics), Councillor Hayley Browne (NCC), Paulina Wilhelm (NCC Manager City Development), Kay Foley (Resident representative) Peter Edmead (Resident representative)

2. Apologies:

- Ross Jackson (Resident representative), Alan Petersen (Resident representative), Todd Dawson (Napier Port), Jo-Ann Young (Napier Port), Karl Halbert (HBRC), Ian Emmerson (User Representative), Councillor Keith Price (NCC), No Seascape representatives.

3. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

- Adopted (Moved by Peter Edmead, Seconded by Hayley Browne)

4. Matters arising from previous meeting

- Peter Edmead queried the District Plan submission process wanting to ensure he was confirmed for a Hearings Panel interview. Paulina Wilhelm confirmed that this process was progressing in streams based on the NCC Hearings Schedule (available online [here](#)). The stream related to noise is not scheduled until next year. Paulina will confirm both Peter and Kay Foley are confirmed as interviews.
- Hannah Strauss noted that Karl Halbert is now confirmed as the HBRC representative on the Port Noise Liaison Committee. Unfortunately, he was called away to urgent work in Wairoa and was unable to attend the meeting.

5. Agenda Review

- No changes

6. NCC District Plan Update

Paulina (NCC Manager City Development)

- Paulina shared a presentation that provided an update on the NCC District Plan ([available here](#)).

- In summary, NCC notified the District Plan in September 2023, with initial submissions closed by December and further submissions in May 2024 followed by a minor addendum. NCC is now preparing Section 42 Reports, which recommend acceptance or rejection of submissions. Hearings are scheduled from November 2024 to July 2025.
- NCC received 288 submissions (5,000 points) and 63 further submissions (2,500 points). Late submissions were also accepted. Submissions raised key issues including fence height, high/medium-density development, subdivision planning, land rezoning, heritage buildings, and noise provisions, with 410 points specifically on noise. Of these 410 points, nearly half of submitters wanted to amend the provisions and a quarter supported the current provisions.
- Key themes of the process included airport noise provisions, state highway noise controls, frost fan noise, CBD noise levels related to development, and port noise. Coastal environment submissions focused on aligning with the NZ Coastal Policy Statement due to outdated rules. Three variations to the Plan were presented, including Natural Hazards (set for notification in March 2025), with an aim to have an Operative Plan by the end of 2025.
- In regard to the Hearings Panel, there is a combination of an independent panel and a Councillors panel that will be involved in this process. Three Councillors have been appointed as Commissioners to hear the topics on the Proposed District Plan, as well as two Independent Commissioners and one Māori Commissioner.
- Paulina highlighted the increased workload due to new national directives, which Council staff are working to incorporate into the Proposed District Plan.
- In terms of next steps, Paulina outlined that the first hearing in November will cover Strategic Direction, with additional hearings on Energy Infrastructure, Transport (March), and Noise (May), the latter being most relevant to the Committee. Decisions are expected by September/November 2025, with an Operative Plan anticipated soon after.
- Hayley Browne inquired about early indications from hearings, which Paulina confirmed are not possible due to chapter interdependencies. Paulina also outlined an appeals process post-decision, involving either mediation or an Environment Court hearing if necessary.
- Lastly, Paulina confirmed for Kay Foley that the existing Operative Plan remains in effect until the new Plan becomes operative. Although partial reviews are possible, NCC opted for a comprehensive update.

7. Low Frequency noise update from CEO

Hannah Strauss (Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Napier Port) and Craig Fitzgerald (Consultant, Marshall Day Acoustics) covered off this section in place of Napier Port CEO Todd Dawson

- Hannah explained that the NZ port collective's initial collaborative approach to address low-frequency noise was deemed anti-competitive by the Commerce Commission. The focus has now shifted to Maritime NZ (MNZ), which agreed to address the issue but anticipates a lengthy process. MNZ plans to work with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to explore

regulatory options, while MDA continues coordinating with MNZ, using data from over 50 vessels currently in the noisy vessel register. Craig noted that MDA's collaboration with MNZ adds credibility when engaging with shipping lines. He also noted that only yesterday, a ship with a negative NEPTUNES noise score had been in Auckland, and he had been on board discussing mitigation measures with the owner.

- Hannah noted that Napier Port has integrated the NEPTUNES noise score into its ship planning software, allowing operations to consider noise levels in vessel planning. Recently, five ships were shifted to mitigate noise impacts on the surrounding area.
- Based on resident feedback, Kay Foley asked if it was possible to restrict ship operations to day time and not work at night. Adam Harvey confirmed that vessels are here for a set period, operating on pre-agreed berthing windows based on the line of service/route around the country. If vessels were to be slowed down at Napier, working only to day time, then they would simply omit the port and head to the next stop. Generally, vessels are in port between 18 – 24 hours, arriving at 0630 and berthing at 0730, and stay as long is required to complete the exchange. If a ship is late arriving, then it will likely be late leaving.
- Peter relayed resident feedback asking why the port can't restrict arrivals and departures to specific hours like airports. He noted that Adam had addressed this, with David Broad adding that, unlike planes, ships generate noise while being loaded. During peak season, noise increases as more reefer containers are loaded, requiring additional power.
- Peter emphasised that the Commerce Commission feedback was quite devastating, particularly given the collective approach had seemed promising, yet the issue of low frequency remains unresolved and without a clear pathway forward. He highlighted specific concerns from residents in Bay View Road about the severe impact on their ability to work and sleep, significantly affecting their lives. Peter also noted that previous reports had suggested noise levels in the area would be unaffected once 6 Wharf was operational.
- David Broad and Adam Harvey expressed understanding of Peter's concerns and affirmed the port's desire for a positive outcome on low-frequency noise. Adam noted that the Commerce Commission had made a similar anti-competitive ruling on a marine pilot safety initiative led by NZ ports. He confirmed that noise regulation falls under Maritime NZ, not local councils, and mentioned a promising IMO agenda slot in 2025 to discuss noise. Craig added that while the focus is on underwater noise, there is an effort to address airborne noise in the same discussion.
- Kay queried if increased productivity would help ships spend less time in port. Adam agreed that the port was always looking to improve productivity, but that wouldn't address the low frequency noise issue.
- Craig responded to Peter Edmead's question about why Bay View Road seems noisier than Shakespeare Road. He explained that line of sight and distance from the noise source significantly impact noise levels. Low-frequency noise may be less noticeable closer to the port due to masking by other sounds, while at greater distances, atmospheric effects absorb high and mid frequencies, making low frequencies more prominent. Craig also mentioned that while

standing sound waves can amplify or cancel low-frequency noise, this effect is generally limited to indoor environments rather than outdoors.

8. E Area Log Yard Update

Adam Harvey (COO, Napier Port)

- Adam provided an update on the current status of the new log yard, noting that the port held a separate meeting with residents earlier in the month and shared minutes afterward. Since the meeting, the port has been using E Area as an overflow storage yard, with QUBE stevedores limiting operations to the Eastern side of the port (main log storage yard). Log receipt into E Area is expected to begin shortly, with operations limited to daylight hours. The port is collaborating with QUBE on noise impact management, including operator inductions for the new area.
- Kay Foley asked about using the “rock bag area” instead. Adam explained that although the port owns this site, it isn’t suitable due to proximity to a State Highway and economic constraints tied to moving logs with legal road trucks. Previously, it was used for log trailer loading, but the cliff face nearby also poses safety concerns.
- Adam noted no new developments regarding log supply via rail from Ernslaw One, which is anticipated to start early next year at the earliest.

9. Annual Noise Review – Report

Craig Fitzgerald (Consultant, Marshall Day Acoustics)

- Craig outlined the Annual Noise Review, which maintains a consistent format for year-to-year comparison. Findings show that average and peak noise levels are similar to previous years, with noisy ships remaining a primary focus of complaints.
- Peter reiterated that the review isn’t required to report on low-frequency noise, but he hoped to address this through NCC, noting the challenges of quantifying this subjective noise type. Craig explained that port noise management has two key components at Napier Port and every other port: first, noise limits and contours, which are regularly validated to ensure they remain effective; and second, the Noise Management Plan, which includes protocols and practical steps to minimise noise impacts. He noted that the focus should ideally lie in this second area.
- Craig clarified that current noise contours are accurate but haven’t yet included measurements with a ship on 6 Wharf. Future contours, as part of the current District Plan review, include a ship at 6 Wharf, potential growth, and future activities. Validation during the busy season will ensure reliability for residents. Craig assured that while low-frequency effects are real, they may not show in the DBA contour, but are addressed in the Noise Management Plan.
- Craig clarified that the current contours are accurate, although they haven’t yet been measured with a ship on 6 Wharf. Future contours, included in the District Plan review, do account for a ship on 6 Wharf as well as projected growth and activity, resulting in two sets of contours at present. Craig expressed strong confidence in the contours’ shape, with validation of a ship on 6 Wharf being the final step to ensure residents’ confidence. Hannah noted that the busy season is ideal

for this validation. Craig confirmed that low-frequency effects are real, though they may not appear in DBA contours due to averaging over five days. The Noise Management Plan helps address these nuances, as its standards were tailored specifically to port noise characteristics. This is where the Noise Management Plan and its measures provide additional support. Craig added that the noise contours are fit for purpose, as the port noise standards were specifically developed with port noise characteristics in mind, not just any general noise.

- Kay suggested that the noise regulations don't seem to align with residents' experiences and, given the technical nature of the noise, proposed creating a one-page explainer to help residents better understand port noise.
- Craig reiterated that the port consistently complies with its noise limits, noting that character components frequently draw complaints from residents. He explained that Hannah's noise data reports include listening to these components, highlighting any port-related issues to understand and address them per the Noise Management Plan. While these components aren't new to port operations, there is more scrutiny in recent years. Craig reaffirmed that the noise contours are accurate and continue to be compliant. He added that individual sensitivity, house construction, and façade quality can influence how noise is experienced, which is why calibration is done outdoors to account for these variables. Lastly, Craig clarified that the largest contour doesn't mean noise is inaudible beyond it; it simply marks where material effects begin, so sound may still be heard beyond these boundaries.
- A brief discussion followed on the scope of Hannah's report in relation to the port's noise limits, with Craig explaining that the focus is on the Ldn 5-day limit, the best indicator of long-term noise effects. He added that other limits are also measured and reported on, including the average overnight, peak 15-minute period, and L Max, which captures bangs and crashes. From a management perspective, the two most useful metrics are addressing bangs and crashes and monitoring vessels with particularly high low-frequency noise. Recordings can be reviewed for sustained noise periods and subsequently ships may be measured elsewhere to assess their impact. Monitoring serves several management purposes beyond compliance. Craig also confirmed that eligibility for the voluntary mitigation scheme is based on the Ldn 5-day limit. It was agreed that Hannah would create a one-page "explainer" to help interpret data from the regular noise data reports. Additionally, resident representatives are encouraged to share these reports with the wider community to build awareness and understanding of port noise obligations.

10. Residents Update

Kay Foley and Peter Edmead (Resident Representatives)

- Kay reported resident complaints about crane noise, forklift behaviour, and hesitancy to file complaints after noisy nights. Adam Harvey stressed the importance of timely complaints with detailed information to help the port respond effectively. Kay also raised concerns about log loading noise, which Adam explained is louder initially due to logs hitting the ship's metal hull before it fills. Craig confirmed this is common, and also occurs during top stowing. Additionally,

Kay shared a query on the voluntary mitigation scheme eligibility; Craig advised that properties touching the boundary should qualify, suggesting the resident seek clarification.

- Peter shared that he contacted 22 residents for written feedback on noise complaints, with three responses so far. These responses highlighted the impact of low-frequency noise on well-being, health, and work. Unlike Kay's area, complaints from his neighbourhood focused exclusively on low-frequency noise rather than bangs or crashes.

11. Complaints received in last 6 months (previously circulated)

Hannah Strauss (Environmental and Sustainability Manager, Napier Port)

- Hannah summarised the complaints received over the past six months. 35 total complaints were received – 31 about low-frequency noise and four about general noise. She noted that eight low-frequency complaints related to Rio vessels (silencers fitted) during berthing and departures when both generators are active, and 12 were tied to the APL Scotland (NEPTUNES score -9) across three occasions. Overall, the NEPTUNES scoring effectively validated noise levels, with some vessels still awaiting measurement by Marshall Day Acoustics.
- Regarding general noise, Hannah noted it was interesting to hear community feedback about crane and forklift noise, as the port has received few complaints. One complaint concerned nighttime noise from the wood chip pile operation, which has since ceased. Another involved trucks honking as children (during school holidays) encouraged drivers to toot while entering the port.
- Adam Harvey confirmed that the log debarker hasn't generated complaints due to its location and quieter belt-based design. He emphasised that the port team remains proactive, continually adjusting operations to reduce noise impacts for residents. David Broad added that the port has invested \$9 million in new equipment arriving next year, with reduced noise an important factor considered in the purchase.

12. Other Business

- Hannah proposed publishing meeting minutes on the Napier Port website for transparency and increased awareness. The Committee agreed, with minutes to be reviewed by members before posting and personal details redacted.
- It was noted that the recent public port bus tours were well-received, and the port plans to make them an annual event. The port also offered to arrange a similar bus tour for local residents in order to provide further insight into operations and ongoing noise mitigation efforts.

13. Actions

- Chris Lonergan to share meeting minutes for member review before posting on the port website.

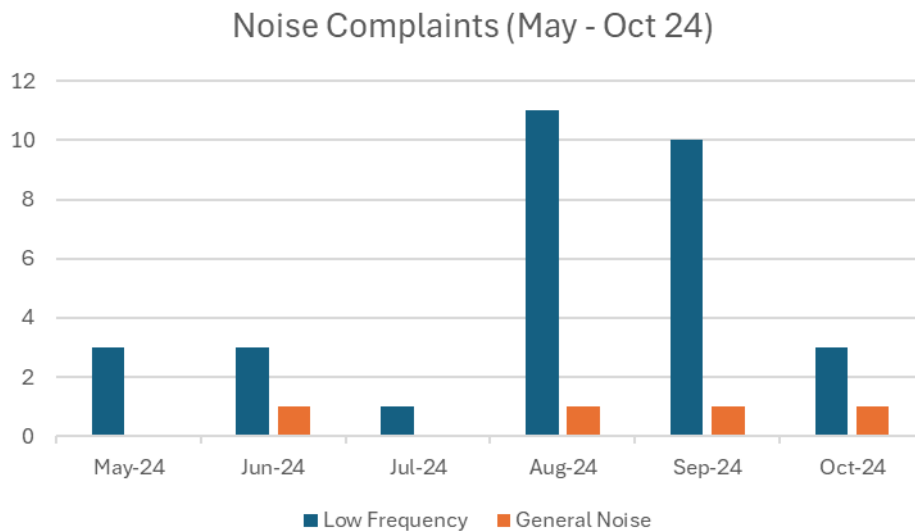
14. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be confirmed closer to the date.

Meeting closed at 5:15 pm

Appendix 1: Noise Complaints Summary

Noise complaints summary: 1st May 2024 – 23rd October 2024



Month	Low Frequency	General Noise
May-24	3	0
Jun-24	3	1
Jul-24	1	0
Aug-24	11	1
Sep-24	10	1
Oct-24	3	1
TOTAL	31	4

Low Frequency x 31:

- **8 x** Complaints regarding Rio vessels on berthing and departure. All Rio vessels have been retro fitted with reactive silencers on one generator, however, require both generators to be running for berthing/departure. Noise from second generator is short term.
- **12 x** Complaints from APL Scotland berthed on 6 wharf on 3 visits (17/06/2024, 15/08/2024 & 28/09/2024) – NEPTUNES score **-9**
- **7 x** Complaints from Maersk Monte Lascar berthed on 6 wharf on 2 occasions (03/09/2024 & 22/10/2024) – NEPTUNES Score **-7**
- **2 x** Complaints from MSC Cape III berthed on 6 wharf on 1 occasion (27/08/2024). Both complaints were from the same resident. On the list to be measured for LF noise by MDA when next in port.
- **1 x** Complaint from Antwerp Bridge berthed on 6 wharf (08/07/2024). This vessel has received a positive noise score of **17**
- **1 x** Complaint from the GSL Kithira berthed on 5 wharf (05/08/2024) – NEPTUNES Score **-10**

General Noise x 4:

- **1 x** Complaint regarding woodchip loaders working throughout the night to load out the last load of woodchip (08/08/2024). Temporary activity that has now ceased.
- **1 x** Complaint regarding container operations generally being noisier than usual. After an investigation into any changes in activities, none were found – however, the wind direction had been unfavourable for resident for a number of days.
- **1 x** Complaint regarding “noise and banging”, when asked for more specifics on the source of the noise, resident did not reply.
- **1 x** Complaint regarding a group of children on Breakwater Road encouraging trucks to toot over the school holidays during the day. This area is outside of our operational control, and the tooting has ceased following the school holidays ending.