



P.O. Box 20717 Glen Eden Auckland 0641

7 December 2007

Brett Sinclair
Coastal Policy Manager
Environment Waikato

cc Dr Vernon Pickett
Coastal Scientist
Environment Waikato

RE: WHANGAMATA MARINA CONSENT - SANDBAR MONITORING CONDITION

Dear Mr Sinclair,

Please refer to our previous correspondence, meetings, and telephone conversations concerning the sandbar monitoring condition attached to the consents granted for the construction of the marina.

If the Marina Society have submitted a plan for the sandbar monitoring, could our Society please have a copy for review and comment prior to your final determinations on the plan.

Our previous correspondence refers to:

- (i) the amenity values of the sandbar;
- (ii) the requirement under the RMA to protect such values;
- (iii) our reasoning that the requirement for a plan to monitor the sandbar for adverse effects reflects the Minister for Environment's judgment that such amenity values exist and that they must be protected from adverse affects under the RMA.

To adequately protect the amenity values associated with the surfing break as the catchment and harbor is developed, we believe that the surfing break needs to be strategically managed as part of coastal resource management in the area. The proposed monitoring plan therefore needs to be undertaken as part of a strategic approach to protect the surfing break. In our view any effective monitoring plan needs to address the following issues:

- development of baseline understanding of surfing wave character, skill level of surfers able to use the break during different conditions, oceanographic processes around the surfing break, important bathymetric features and sediment patterns;
- a method to monitor changes to character of surfing waves over time including surfing parameters discussed in Scarfe *et al.* (*in press*), and changes in skill level of surfers able to surf the waves;
- ongoing monitoring of changes to the wave, current and sediment patterns which control the shape, size and location of the delta over time, and hence dictate surfing conditions.

- analysis of the linkage between such changes and the marina construction, operation and and potential maintenance activities (e.g. *dredging of the harbour navigation channels, dredging of the ebb delta or dumping of nourishment offshore or near the Whangamata beaches*), as well as natural variability in the surfing wave quality.
- Hypothetical mitigation measures which might be undertaken in the case of adverse effects being Identified

In addition, we call Environment Waikato's attention to the broader issue of the high public amenity values of the many high quality surf breaks throughout the Waikato and Coromandel regions (for example those at Raglan, Whangamata , and Hot Water Beach) and the need to account for the protection and enhancement of these resources within regional Coastal Management plans and policies.

We believe that a lack of strategic management of surfing breaks results in unnecessary conflict between coastal users, and potential depletion or loss of surfing amenities. The Whangamata marina development has highlighted the type of problems that can occur when surfing resources are not properly managed and the conflict between local surfers and the developers are unnecessarily high. Analysis of baseline information (including modeling of harbour currents using high resolution bathymetry, understanding wave and harbor infilling processes) early in the project would have reduced the defensiveness of the surfing community. As it stands many surfers still do not trust that all possible initiatives to protect the surfing amenities have been applied during the marina development to date. This is not surprising as Scarfe *et al. (in prep.)* show how historically surfing breaks have been modified due to a lack of detailed consideration of surfing. This includes the destruction of the El Segundo (California) surfing break and subsequent prosecution of the developer, which would be a travesty for all involve if this occurred at Whangamata.

We think the case of Whangamata, where a private Marina development is posing significant risks to an exceptional public (surfing) amenity, reflects a lack of awareness on the part of EW and TCDC as to the value of the sandbar to a wide variety of recreational users. We hope that going forward surfing resources will enjoy more strategic than reactive management from the various parties with legal powers to manage the coastal environment. We hope that as advocates for our members and the wider surfing community, we can provide some support to local authorities and conservation groups in this regard.

Dr Vernon Pickett has been supplied with various publications on surfing science and surfing and coastal management. We understand he has reviewed some of the literature and is well informed on modern methods available to study surfing, and to deal with management issues. The list of publications is attached below, and we can provide further copies of the documentation if necessary. The most recent summary of how to manage surfing resources is provided by Scarfe *et al. (in prep.)*:

'Baseline information must also be collected to develop an understanding of the physical processes around a surfing break. To facilitate baseline studies, and ongoing monitoring of surfing breaks, this paper identifies the types of surfing and oceanographic factors that need to be considered, including identification of environmental data important such studies. The need for regional and central governments to strategically protect surfing breaks using legislation, reserves and coastal management plans is explored and found not to be widely practised.'

Any information you can provide on how the ideal management practices discussed in the literature can be incorporated into practical coastal planning in the Waikato (including during the marina consent implementation) would be greatly appreciated.

We thank you for any further reassurance you can provide that the Whangamata Bar will not be affected by development of the harbour, or catchment.

Yours Sincerely,

Monique Davis

Secretary

Surfbreak Protection Society

List of surfing references provided

- SCARFE, B.E., 1999. *Hydrography and Photogrammetry: Tools for Artificial Surfing Reef Studies*. Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago, Honour's Dissertation, 116p.
- SCARFE, B.E., 2002. *Categorizing Surfing Manoeuvres Using Wave and Reef Characteristics*. Hamilton, New Zealand: The University of Waikato, Master's thesis, 181 p.
- SCARFE, B.E., BLACK, K.P., CHONG, A.K., DE LANGE, W.L., PHILLIPS, D., and MEAD, S.T., 2002. The Application of Surveying Techniques to Artificial Surfing Reef Studies. *Trans Tasman Surveyor*, 5, pp. 29-40.
- SCARFE, B.E., DE LANGE, W.P., CHONG, A.K., BLACK, K.P., and MEAD, S.T., 2002. The Influence of Surfing Wave Parameters on Manoeuvre Type from Field Investigations at Raglan, New Zealand. *Proceedings of the Surfing Art Science Issues Conference 2 - (Ventura, California, SASIC 2)*, 9 November 2002, pp. 74-89.
- MEAD, S.T., BLACK, K.P., SCARFE, B.E., and FRAZERHURST, J., 2003. The Effect of Wave Focusing on Surfing Site Selection and Design at Scales of Intercontinental Shelf to Sub-Tidal Reef. *In: BLACK, K.P. and MEAD, S.T. (eds.), Artificial Surfing Reefs 2003: The 3rd International Conference* (Raglan, New Zealand), CD publication, ISBN: 0-473-09801-6. pp. 115-137.
- SCARFE, B.E., ELWANY, M.H.S., MEAD, S.T., and BLACK, K.P., 2003. The Science of Surfing Waves and Surfing Breaks: A Review. *In: BLACK, K.P., and MEAD, S.T. (eds.), Artificial Surfing Reefs 2003: The 3rd International Conference* (Raglan, New Zealand), CD Publication, ISBN: 0-473-09801-6. pp. 37-59.
- SCARFE, B.E., ELWANY, M.H.S., BLACK, K.P., and MEAD, S.T., 2003. *Surfing Conditions Around Jetties*. Scripps Institution of Oceanography Technical Report, 92p. + Appendices.
- SCARFE, B.E., and HEALY, T.R., 2005. Baseline Bathymetric Data Collection for Monitoring of Bar, Rip and Salient Response to an Artificial Surfing Reef - Mount Maunganui, New Zealand. *In: TOWNSEND, M. and WALKER, D. (eds.), Proceedings for the 2005 Coasts and Ports Australasian Conference* (Adelaide, South Australia), 20-23 September 2005, p. 459-464.
- SCARFE, B.E., HEALY, T.R., RENNIE, H., MEAD, S.T., *in prep.* Oceanographic Considerations for the Sustainable Management of Surfing Breaks – To be submitted to the *Journal of Coastal Research*.
- SCARFE, B.E., HEALY, T.R., and RENNIE, H.G., *in press.* Research-Based Surfing Literature for Coastal Management and the Science of Surfing – A Review. Submitted to *Journal of Coastal Research* 30 October 2007.

(Email Response from Brent Sinclair)

Hi Monique,

I have received that letter. It arrived here on the 13th. Sorry I hadn't replied as yet - mainly as there is nothing yet to report. The Marina Society is working on the bar monitoring plan but as yet a plan has not been submitted to EW for approval.

I have passed your letter on to our Coastal Scientist who will be reviewing the technical aspects of the monitoring plan when it is submitted. I have also passed the letter on to the Policy Group of EW which is responsible for the development and ongoing review of the Regional Coastal Plan.

As I have discussed with one of your colleagues in the past, whilst the consent that the Marina Society has been granted does not require that it consults with organisations such as yours as part of the development of the bar monitoring plan, that does not prevent you from approaching the Society to express your views. As I have also noted previously, I am happy to provide you with a copy of the monitoring plan when it is submitted.

Rgds,

Brent Sinclair