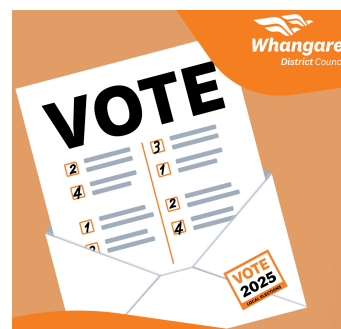


Majority of Local Candidates Oppose Sand Mining

The forty-one candidates in this year's Whangarei District Council local elections were asked whether they support or oppose marine sand mining in Te Akau Bream Bay, and to explain their reasons.



35 candidates **OPPOSE** the mining of marine sand in Te Akau Bream Bay

1 candidate gave a **NEUTRAL** response

5 candidates did not respond.

We encourage you follow the links in the table below to view their statements and to share this information.

This survey was carried out by the Sub Committee of the Whangārei Heads Citizens Association -Say No to Sand Mining Te Akau Bream Bay

Candidates	Standing for:	Oppose	Support	No response
Cocurullo, Vince	Mayor	X		
Couper, Ken	Mayor	X		
Flower, Brad	Mayor	X		
Green, Fiona	Mayor	X		
Olsen, Marie	Mayor	X		

Candidate	Standing for Councilor in:	Oppose	Support	No response
Baldwin, David	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Couper, Ken	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Grace, Paul	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Schuster, Simon	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Shirkey, Shilane	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Yovich, Matthew	Bream Bay Ward	X		
Armstrong, Chanelle	Hikurangi Coastal Ward	X		
Bretherton, Suzy	Hikurangi Coastal Ward			X
De Langen, Norma	Hikurangi Coastal Ward	X		

Candidate	Standing for Councilor in:	Oppose	Support	No response
Haskell, Ren	Hikurangi Coastal Ward			X
<u>Humphreys, Vicky</u>	Hikurangi Coastal Ward	X		
<u>Martin, Stephen Gregory</u>	Hikurangi Coastal Ward	X		
<u>McKenzie, Scott</u>	Hikurangi Coastal Ward	X		
<u>Reid, Simon</u>	Mangakahia - Maungatapere Ward	X	X	
<u>Robinson, Tim</u>	Mangakahia - Maungatapere Ward	X		
<u>Harding, Deb</u>	Whangārei District Māori Ward	X		
<u>Ruka, Phoenix</u>	Whangārei District Māori Ward	X		
<u>Taylor, Sheila</u>	Whangārei District Māori Ward	X		
<u>Baker, Tangiwai</u>	Whangārei Heads Ward	X		
<u>Penney, Spence</u>	Whangārei Heads Ward	X		
<u>Twyman, Jon</u>	Whangārei Heads Ward	X		
<u>Wild, Anthony Huon</u>	Whangārei Heads Ward	X		
<u>Card, Jesse</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Christie, Crichton</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Connop, Nicholas</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Cullen, Philip George</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Dingle, Tony</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
Epati, Tiana	Whangārei Urban Ward			X
<u>Flower, Brad</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
Golightly, Jayne	Whangārei Urban Ward			X
Gosling, Paul	Whangārei Urban Ward			X
<u>Henry, Gabriel</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Kewene, Heath</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Olsen, Marie</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Pepper, Julie</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Peters, Carol</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Rameka, Jodie</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Young, Adam</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		
<u>Yovich, Paul</u>	Whangārei Urban Ward	X		

Statement from Vince Cocurullo

While I have presently two roles here one as the present Mayor of Whangarei and the other as someone asking for your vote I need to be make myself very clear in the way I answer, which will not commit our Council in a role that is not theirs to control. Personally, I do not believe in Ocean Sand Mining. When considering the role that a District Council plays, sand mining does not fall under their jurisdiction of the local Council. Whereas sand mining does fall under the role of the Regional Council. In this particular situation, Central Government have allowed a Fast Tracking application to be used, which means that the Regional Council has been taken away from the decision-making process.

There is also a requirement under the Fast Track Legislation that requires an applicant to prove their case to Central Government.

If Central Government allows for a submission process to be used, and allows for submissions from our Local Council, while I do have my personal view, I would need to consider the views of all elected members when writing the submission.

Thank you for the opportunity to answer your question.

Regards

Vince Cocurullo

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Statement from Ken Cooper

I write to confirm my support for the Whangarei Heads Citizens Association – Sub Committee, Say No To Sand Mining Te Akau Bream Bay, opposition against sand mining in bream bay.

I do not support sand mining for the following reasons. Auckland will have the financial benefit while Whangarei and Bream Bay will carry all the ecological, economic and environmental risk. There will be no jobs created here in Northland.
Bream Bay Ward Councillor and Mayoral candidate
Ken Couper

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Statement from Brad Flower

My statement in regards to this request:

I strongly oppose the proposed marine sand mining in Te Akau Bream Bay. This project threatens the ecological integrity of one of Northland's most treasured coastal environments.

The plan to extract over 8 million cubic metres of sand over 35 years will irreversibly damage marine habitats, disrupt fish populations, erode coastal protections, and endanger critically threatened species such as the tara iti. The fast-track process being used bypasses public consultation, denying our communities a voice in decisions that will affect us for generations.

I stand with local residents, mana whenua, and environmental advocates in calling for sustainable alternatives that protect our coastline and marine biodiversity.

Nga mihi

Brad Flower

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Statement from Fiona Green

I oppose it.

Regards Fiona Green

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Statement from Marie Olsen

*I am opposed to sand mining as if this were allowed to happen it would cause major damage to the environment
We need to investigate other alternatives*

Thanks

Cr Marie Olsen

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Statement from Julie Pepper

Without understanding your organisation and its cause more fully I can't comment specifically, but I oppose any commercial venture that disturbs the natural harmony and balance of our seabed's and foreshores.
Julie Pepper

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Statement from David Baldwin

Thank you for your contact.

At the Ruakaka "Meet the Candidates" evening on Tuesday 12th August, I stated my personal position as being opposed to offshore sand mining in Bream Bay.

My position as a (possible) elected member of council would be made solely in the context that I represent the wishes of Bream Bay residents and ratepayers. It appears clear that a large majority of residents are in opposition to offshore sand mining.

I would be dismayed if this issue was in any way put to elected members of either Whangarei District Council or Northland Regional Council for consideration without due and thorough engagement with residents and affected parties including, if necessary, some form of poll or referenda to demonstrate a clear mandate to council/s and if necessary, central government.

I have also clearly stated that I have yet to see any reasoning why onshore mining would not be a far superior option from an environmental viewpoint.

As an avid user of Bream Bay, (and the reason I moved here) I am very concerned at the potential for non-replenishment of sand once removed which understandably carries immense risk to a bay that has remained relatively ecologically stable and sustains major sea life.

I trust that this is satisfactory,

Kindly,

Dave Baldwin (Waipu).

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Statement from Paul Grace

I'm standing for WDC in the Bream Bay Ward.

I stand against and say no to sand mining. The Fast Track consent reeks of cronyism and skullduggery and we should not be hoodwinked by it.

Paul Grace

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Statement from Simon Schuster

Position: I strongly oppose the fast-tracking of sandmining consents in our region.

Community consultation is essential — your voice matters.

The environmental damage would be devastating to marine life, fish populations, and surf breaks, with long-term costs to Bream Bay. I oppose taking resources from our community just to line the pockets of big business.

Simon Schuster

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Statement from Shilane Shirkey

Kia ora Melissa and the wider Bream Bay and Whangārei Heads communities,

Thank you for your letter and for the tireless efforts of our communities in standing up for the health and future of Te Akau Bream Bay.

I want to make it absolutely clear that I STRONGLY OPPOSE the fast-tracked application by McCallum Brothers Ltd to mine marine sand in Bream Bay.

Earlier this year, I stood proudly with locals at both the beach protest and the flotilla protest in Ruakākā, joining the call to protect our moana, our coastlines, and our way of life. These peaceful protests and the petition signed by over 15,000 people send a united and undeniable message: our environment and communities deserve better! This is not just a political issue—it's personal. My daughter, along with local hapū, have spent the last three years gathering data on marine and bird life in the waters of Bream Bay. This work has reinforced what we already know: this is a delicate, thriving ecosystem that must be protected, not exploited.

The environmental risks of this application are too great. The absence of local economic benefit, the bypassing of community and iwi voices, and the precedent of ecological damage from similar operations elsewhere all make it clear: this proposal SHOULD NOT proceed.

As a candidate for Bream Bay Ward, I am committed to being a strong voice for our communities and ensuring that local concerns, especially on matters as significant as this, are brought to the council table and heard loud and clear.

Ngā mihi

Shilane Shirkey

Candidate for Bream Bay Ward

Whangārei District Council

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Statement from Matthew Yovich

I oppose the McCallum Brothers fast-track sand mining proposal in Te Akau Bream Bay.

Reasoning: Councils need to put ratepayers first. This application fails on three counts. First, the fast-track process cuts local people out of the decision-making, that's not democracy. Second, without full and proper consultation, and all the information, we can not determine if the proposal will deliver real economic value to Northland or Auckland, while putting our marine environment and coastal communities at risk. And third, it's a distraction from what councils should be doing: getting the basics right – roads, pipes, water, and rubbish. Ratepayers deserve representatives who will stand up for transparency, accountability, and common sense. That means saying no to costly, destructive projects the community doesn't want, and focusing instead on protecting local assets and delivering core services.

Matthew Yovich | ACT Local for Bream Bay Ward Whangarei District Council

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Statement from Chanelle Armstrong

Thank you for your letter and for the incredible mahi you and your community are doing to protect Te Akau Bream Bay. You have my full and unequivocal support in opposing McCallum Brothers fast-track application to mine sand from this precious rohe.

Protecting and preserving our whenua and moana for future generations is one of my core priorities. This proposal is entirely counter to that. It threatens fragile marine ecosystems, undermines coastal resilience, damages tourism and community wellbeing, and disregards the cultural significance this area holds for hapū and iwi.

I share your concerns about the lack of transparency and inclusivity in the fast-track process. Our local democracy and environmental stewardship rely on robust community and iwi engagement, not decisions made behind closed doors that ignore both science and lived experience.

I stand with you in saying loudly and clearly: there is no economic justification, no environmental sense, and no cultural respect in this proposal. Bream Bay must be protected, not exploited.

Wishing you every success in your advocacy. Your kaupapa matters deeply, and I will continue to speak out in support of protecting our moana and whenua.

*Ngā manaakitanga,
Chanelle Armstrong*

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Statement from Norma De Langen

Thank you for your email.

I support the local opposition to fast-tracking of the Mining of Marine Sand in Te Akau Bream Bay. Whangārei Heads Citizens Association Sub Committee - Say No Sand Mining Te Aka Bream Bay - have put forward a number of strong and compelling reasons for their opposition, including the lack of community engagement and their concern for the health of both the marine and the coastal environment. I am in total agreement with them.

Thanks and regards,

Norma de Langen

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Statement from Vicky Humphreys

I haven't had time to do the research to form an informed opinion. If elected my opinion, I feel is irrelevant as I am there to support the views of my constituency. I feel there is a strong opposition against it and if elected I will prioritise community consultation on this issue.

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Statement from Stephen Gregory Martin

I oppose the sand mining. Coastal erosion is a significant issue for many coastal areas. We don't need to contribute to this by mining sand

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Statement from Scott McKenzie

I am firmly opposed to the fast-track application for marine sand mining at Te Akau Bream Bay. The sand there was put in place by the Waikato River thousands of years ago and it cannot naturally be replenished. Once it is gone, it is gone forever.

This proposal delivers no real benefit to Northland. At the same time, it risks long lasting damage to our marine ecosystems, our coastal environment, and our communities. The courts have already recognised the ecological and cultural harm caused by similar operations at Mangawhai and Pakiri. We should not repeat those mistakes here.

Local people have made it clear through petitions, protests on land and at sea, and strong community opposition that this mining is not acceptable. I stand with them.

We must protect the health of our coasts and oceans, not exploit them for short term gain.

Ngā mihi,

Scott McKenzie

Whangarei District Councillor - Hikurangi-Coastal Ward

Note this is my personal view and not that of Whangarei District Council

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Statement from Simon Reid

Hi Melissa.

That decision is way above our/my paygrade. There is a need to balance requirements against the ecological protection. There is a need for sand or a composite to replace it.

If the dredging is in the bay and likely to affect the replacement of tidal wash out, replacement, then the answer would have to be no.

If the dredging is far enough out to not affect the natural flow of sand, yes, why not.

As I stated, careful approach is needed. Stamping your feet and screaming doesn't work well for anyone.

Regards.

Simon Reid

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Statement from Tim Robinson

Thanks for the enquiry. Given we have a family bach at Lang's Beach, I can happily state for the record that I am opposed. My position is based on a clear lack of evidence that the practise does not compromise sea life, or alter the seabed topography etc.

I am happy to discuss further with anyone if required.

Thanks & Regards

Tim Robinson

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Statement from Deb Harding

Ko Deb Harding tāku ingoa, ko Takahiwai te whenua, te marae, ko Patuharakeke te hapū. Kia ora koutou katoa. At the recent Bream Bay and Waipū candidates' meeting, I made clear my personal opposition to the Te Akau Bream Bay sand mining application.

As a proud member of Patuharakeke, I have witnessed the tireless mahi of our Pou Taiao team, working alongside agencies and researchers to respond to the decline of our pipi and cockle beds, and more recently our mussels and scallops. Sand mining will only add another layer of pressure to these already stressed taonga species.

I also serve on the Whangārei Harbour Marine Advisory Group, which oversees two important marine reserves — Waikaraka and Motukaroro.

At Motukaroro, just across from the refinery, we have seen incredible recovery: bigger fish, more abundant life, and the return of biodiversity. This proves that when we give the ocean a chance to heal, it does. Why then would we risk undoing this progress in Bream Bay with an activity as destructive as sand mining?

At the Bream Bay Guardians presentation of David Attenborough's Ocean film, I echoed his message: we must protect at least 30% of our oceans if we want them to recover. That is why working in partnership — hapū, Guardians, scientists, and community — is essential. This kaupapa will demand time, energy, and resources, and the load must be shared.

Our tīpuna taught us: Nāku te rourou, nāu te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi — with your food basket and my food basket, our people will thrive. The same is true for our moana: only together can we protect what sustains us.

Ngā mihi nui

Deb Harding

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Statement from Phoenix Ruka

Kia Ora !

I one hundred percent, unequivocally oppose and am against the sand mining in Te Akau Bream Bay!

It damages our taiao and puts at risk the future of our people and the ability for our mokopuna to enjoy.

Opposing the taking of 8.5 million cubic metres of sand over 35 years, with no real benefit to Northland, but huge damage to our moana, our kai moana, and the protection our coast gives us is a no brainer for me.

Our whakapapa is tied to the moana and whenua. Stripping it away for profit goes against our role as kaitiaki. It will speed up erosion, hurt our marine life, and ignore the voices of local whānau, hapū and iwi.

Nāku noa nā,

Phoenix Ruka

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Statement from Sheila Taylor

Thank you for your email and opportunity to share my whakāro with your rūpū. I know the hapori have rallied in opposition to sand mining and I am happy to share my thoughts.

As a candidate for Whangarei District Council, my role is not to prejudge specific resource consent applications, but to advocate for robust policy frameworks and decision-making processes that ensure the right outcomes are made for our district. It is through this form of advocacy that I will be able to advocate for the views, needs and interests of Whangarei's constituents.

With that said, my position on coastal resource management, including sand mining activities in our takutai, is grounded in three key principles:

Supporting Mana Whenua Perspectives

First and foremost, I stand with mana whenua, mana moana as they hold the mana in this situation to be heard, not me as a prospective councillor. My personal views, although aligned, are irrelevant. Hapū voices must always come to the fore.

The spiritual, cultural, environmental, social and economic significance of the takutai moana to hapū cannot be separated from decisions about its physical use. Mana whenua has expressed their concerns and opposition to sand mining, and they speak from a perspective that encompasses not just immediate environmental effects, but intergenerational responsibility and the mauri (life force) of the land and sea. This holistic understanding is essential for making decisions that truly serve our community's long-term wellbeing.

Opposition to Fast Track Legislation

What I do oppose, is the use of fast-track legislation for projects of this nature. Complex environmental and cultural decisions require thorough consultation and meaningful community engagement - processes that cannot be rushed without compromising their integrity.

Fast tracking undermines democratic participation and often sidelines the very communities most affected by proposed developments. It prioritises expedience over excellence in decision-making, creating risks of unintended consequences that could affect our district for generations. Our coastal environment and marine ecosystems are too precious to risk through hasty approvals.

Furthermore, the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 provides specific frameworks for recognising customary rights and interests in the marine and coastal environment. Due to a long and drawn-out process, no decision has yet been made regarding customary marine titles and protected customary rights for this area, meaning the full extent of customary rights and interests have not yet been formally recognised or protected. Fast tracking development decisions while these fundamental questions of customary rights and interests remain unresolved undermines the intent of the Act and risks proceeding without proper consideration of all relevant rights and interests in this marine environment.

Embracing Te Ao Māori in Decision-Making

I advocate for long-term decision-making frameworks that integrate te ao Māori perspectives as a foundation for principled and ethical governance. Te ao Māori offers valuable concepts such as thinking seven generations ahead, understanding the interconnectedness of all elements in our environment, and prioritising collective wellbeing over short-term individual gains.

Such approaches ensure that decisions about resource extraction consider not just immediate economic benefits, but the full spectrum of environmental, cultural, social, and economic impacts over time. It recognises that sustainable prosperity comes from working with natural systems rather than against them.

The sand mining proposal presents exactly the kind of decision where these principles must guide us toward protecting what makes our district special for current and future generations.

Given I am a Māori Ward candidate, I would love to know the views of the rūpū in relation to:

**The retention of māori wards*

**Customary marine titles and protected customary rights.*

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I hope to hear your thoughts on the two matters above.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa taki ni

My strength is not that of one person, but that of many

*Nga mihi,
Sheila Taylor*

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Statement from Tangiwai Baker

I'm against sand mining. I also don't think many of the surfers or fishermen in our community would support it. Ultimately, sand is one of those things that they're not making any more of and when it's gone, it's gone. I don't see any good reason why a sand-mining application would be fast-tracked in the face of such strong community opposition.

Thanks,

Tangiwai

Candidate for Whangārei Heads ward

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Statement from Spence Penney

I oppose the sand mining in Te Akau Bream Bay my reasons are as follows.

A lot can change in 35 years. McCallum Brothers have stated themselves that there are two existing alternatives to mining marine sand including the use of quarries and the manufacturing of engineered sand which is able to be used. If McCallum Bro are granted access to mine sand off Te Akau Bream Bay for 35 years there would be over 8.5 million cubic metres of sand extracted. They have appropriated statistics from various entities to support their claims that this is a viable option. Those statistics present relate to today who is to say that the extraction over 35 years that the sand they wish to take doesn't affect the environment over a 35 year period, so the statistics which they have gained today might not necessarily work in 35 years time which is proposed time frame

I don't believe that NZ as with the rest of the world does not necessarily rely on the sand which MC br claim used in construction NZ can't come up with a better solution to using sand in their building practices. A think a far better option that Mc b if they are granted consent to mine in Te that This Government under fast track legislation they have allowed Mc in but better Mc b apply for 3 yearly rights to mine the sand that could be renewable on applying again over 3 year periods. That would bring into effect a change of government and change of legislation. New Gov often bring in new legislation like current Govt who brought in current FT legislation Fast track legislation in 3 years time might change

I oppose fast track legislation

- 1. There are alternatives and McCallum Bro state there are alternatives why aren't they using them*
- 2. Things change in building industry and other industries, if granted 35 years right to extract sand that would be non-negotiable in 35 years, a lot changes in 35 years I don't believe they should be granted for a 35 year period.*
- 3. Appropriating various statistics to support their claims doesn't hold water for me when they say in their own fact sheets that there are viable alternatives to using marine sand in Te Akau and also they have mined for over the past 75 years from Managawhai and Pakariki areas*

Thank you for your time

Spence Penny

Whangarei Heads Candidate

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Statement from Jon Twyman

I am strongly against sandmining Bream Bay as well as the bigger issue of ministers fast-tracking consents.

The reasons this is important to me are...

Environmental concerns: I've seen the massive loss of sand from Mair Road and around the ex-refinery. Right now, we are hugely vulnerable to another storm and it will take years/decades to recover. We cannot afford to give the sand away. We need more sand - not less.

2. There is no reason to give this sand away. It's not going to give any local people any jobs. Concrete usage in the construction industry has also recently been reported to be less than it's ever been in the last 10 years and there are many other sources of sand that could be used, so there is no imperative for the mining.

3. The fast-tracking legislation needs to go. It removes the ability of the local community to have their say. I see this as part of a bigger trend to take the responsibilities of local councils and give them to local government. Those ministers making the decisions do not have the same level of local accountability (or even local knowledge). Our authoritarian government is pushing us towards a dictatorship. You can see this trend with the Freedom camping legislation, the water management directives, the fluoridation directive, the move to standardise parking infringement fees, and many more initiatives that take control from a local level and hands it to central government. This is a huge party of why I'm choosing to run for WDC. Not only does our council need to be stronger, but we need to be smarter. We need to be awake to these threats. We also need councilors who know that there is an agenda at work here, so we have to be very clear about where we stand. We have to be better at giving well thought out direction that can not be misinterpreted.

This is a big topic that I doubt I can give full justice to in a short email but hope that this is enough to give a good outline of my position.

Thanks

Jon Twyman for Whangarei Heads.

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Statement from Anthony Huon Wild

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this sand mining consent application in Te Akau Bream Bay. As one of the four Whangarei District Council Candidates standing in the Whangarei Heads ward my response as follows:

Firstly thank you for taking the initiative to give this application some air and try to stop this application from getting approved. I applaud you and those who are with you for your efforts!

As a Candidate I can tell you I am 110% opposed to this sand mining application and would make the following points:

In my opinion taking that amount of sand from the natural seabed over an extended period of time will have a dramatic effect on the Bream Bay coastline. Storm effects and sand shifting will maintain the sea floor where the extraction has taken place and this will have a knock-on effect on the coastline. We have enough problems maintaining the foreshore dunes where fairy terns' nest at sites in Ruakaka and Waipu Cove.

The effect on marine ecology are unknown other than we all know there will be an effect. We should all protect this environment for future generations

There are other land-based sand extraction options where the environmental impact can be monitored easily. Taking sand from a marine environment will be challenging to monitor the effects of.

There are probably other points against such a mining proposal however these are the main points as I see it with respect to the sand mining activity.

Regarding the applicant for this consent it would seem they hold the unenviable record of the highest Environment Court awarded costs at some \$500K with respect to sand mining at Pakiri beach. Would seem their mining activities were somewhat problematic in this case, which for me is also a black mark. The findings of the environment court make very interesting reading for this company.

Our beautiful coastline has been exploited by others for personal gain such as:

Scallop dredging to the point that it has become uneconomic and has been stopped.

Cockle taking by commercial guys on snake bank in the harbour!

Pilchard Trawl net fishing for the Australia tuna farms has had a dramatic effect on our marine ecology and birdlife in my view. Whilst fishing along our coast I would see these pair trawlers going up and down the coast. It is now very rare to see sea birds working at sea and noticeable the drop on sea bird life. I put this down to the pilchard overfishing. We don't need any more exploitation of our coast for personal gain thank you very much.

I would be 100% opposed to a sand mining proposal and would do all I could

to see this application stopped. Guess the NRC candidates will have more clout the

us who make it through on the Whangarei District Council ticket. You can be assured I would do everything I can to oppose any such application in my capacity either as a councillor (if elected) or just as a local citizen.

Thank you for reading my blurb.

Tony Wild

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Statement from Jesse Card

I oppose sand mining Bream Bay as it does not benefit us. It also does not protect or enhances our local environment and ecosystems.

Thank you for your work in this matter,

Jesse Card

Candidate for Urban Ward, Whangārei

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Statement from Crichton Christie

I am Crichton Christie standing for the Whangārei District Council in the Urban Ward.

I acknowledge that sand is a very necessary part for the NZ economy.

However, my understanding is that the sand of the coast of Bream Bay is a closed eco system i.e. it does not get replaced so therefore I am opposed to the sand mining of the coast.

Thanks

Crichton Christie

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Statement from Nicholas Connop

I don't support the sand mining.

My concern is to the wider area and impact the removal will have to the sea creatures and beach along Bream Bay.

While the district council doesn't have the focus of the issue, I believe we should be able to have a say on it.

Nicholas Connop

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Statement from Philip George Cullen

Local opposition to fast tracking of the mining of marine sand in Te Akau Bream Bay

The issue

The McCallum Brothers Limited (MBL) have attempted to fast track an application to extract 8.5 million cubic metres of sand from Te Akau Bream Bay over a 35 year period in what could be viewed as an attempt to bypass community and iwi involvement. The flow-on consequences according to opponents are long term negative effects to marine ecosystems, coastal communities, tourism, and climate change.

Arguments against mining marine sand

According to Vance (2022), sand has been extracted from Mangawhai Harbour dating back to the 1940's and 1950's and trucked to Auckland for construction during the post-war building boom. As the population grew, mining increased. By the 1990's, up to 15,000 cubic meters was mined annually and commercial operators began suction dredging from the sand bars off Pakiri Beach. Notable changes to the harbour entrance occurred and major storms broke the sand spit completely making the harbour more dangerous to negotiate by boat.

Although many changes to the coastline were attributable to Cyclone Bola of March 1988, questions started to arise among locals as to whether sand mining was attributable. Sand dunes are natural habitats for native plants, grasses and birds. The Mangawhai sand spit is a wildlife refuge, a breeding ground for the rare fairy tern/tara iti, the dotterel/tūturiwhatu and home to colonies of threatened red-billed gulls. Sand dunes also protect land and property from erosion, storms, cyclones and tsunamis. Mining sand, even though it is offshore, nevertheless it still has an erosion effect on the sand dunes onshore. It is believed that sand is being extracted at a far greater rate than what it can be naturally replenished.

There appears to be no economic benefit to the local community, or the Northland region from sand mining as the profits from the activities appear to be going outside of the region.

Arguments for mining marine sand

According to Boyd (2025), fish are generally highly mobile creatures. They typically avoid disturbance and usually return when it ceases. Boyd suggests that on this basis the impact of extraction, activity on water quality and underwater noise would have a low to negligible effect on sea life. Mining would provide a local supply of sand for the construction of a four-laned highway from Whangarei to Auckland, which is much needed to enhance connectivity between regions. Supporters proclaim that Te Akau Bream Bay is already highly commercialised because of its anchorage and access to the busiest ports for freighters and super tankers. Also, Whangarei has ship repair facilities, which is a multimillion dollar industry and the McCallum brothers appear to have indicated that they would use the facilities at Whangarei for their ship and barge repairs.

My thoughts

I support economic growth for local businesses and balanced forward thinking strategies. However, I am not convinced that the notion to continue sand mining at the proposed rate is a strategy of balance. I am also not convinced that this is going to benefit the local economy as much as it is purported to. The fast tracking of this proposal has the potential to remove full community consultation and also makes me suspicious.

References

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Vance, A. (2022, 6th March). Sand mining: the local towns who say the hourglass is empty.

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Statement from Tony Dingle

I thank you for bringing this matter to my attention; after having done a quick Google search into this matter, I've formed the following opinions :

1/ Due to a recent High Court decision giving McCallum brothers 2 years to wind up their operations of sand dredging at Sandspit hence the application to dredge off Bream Bay

2/ McCallum brothers are using the "fast track" process (due to the above decision) to expedite the normal process and I'm concerned environmental impacts, and Maori rights have been circumvented

*3/ I can see No benefit to the people of Whangarei region if this activity was to proceed in its current state
I am therefore Opposed*

Regards

Tony Dingle

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Statement from Gabriel Henry

Thank you for reaching out to me, allowing me to share my thoughts on this issue.

I would definitely be opposed to this proposal,

I'm an avid fisherman and have fished and collected kaimoana from within this area for many years.

I'm no marine scientist, but I have no doubt that the environmental impact from this sand mining would have a negative affect on all the sea life within this area.

So many people of Whangārei and beyond use this area to harvest kaimoana, which is a right of all the people of Aotearoa.

I am unsure what other options that are available for the resource in question, but I believe that fast tracking anything is not fair nor productive.

I'm saddened and perplexed as to why our government keep wanting to fast track project's, that affect so many people and environments,

I thought we lived in a country where our democracy was steadfast, where everyone gets a fair say and not overruled by a minority

Naku Noa

Gabriel Henry

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Statement from Heath Kewene

Thanks for resending the email out again. Having caught up on what is going on with the Bream Bay Sand Mining issue during the week, I'm happy and able to give a response myself...

"I vehemently oppose allowing sand mining to begin operating in Bream Bay. Although it's been raised that council's influence is limited due to the central governments fast track process, I would join the rest of the councillors in opposition in lobbying and advocating on behalf of the ten's of thousands of concerned residents, and interfere in the expedited process as we possibly can. It's clear the people of Bream Bay, Whangarei Heads and the wider Whangarei District oppose the operation, and I support our opposition to it."

Kind regards,

Heath Kewene

Candidate for Whangarei District Council - Whangarei Urban Ward

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Statement from Carol Peters

I chair Climate Action taitokerau trust and i oppose sand mining for the following reasons.

- 1. Sand mining degrades local typography and habitat for local species*
- 2. Dredging in ocean and on the shores reduces carbon drawdown*
- 3. The commercial benefit is not for Northland*

Dr Carol peters

Urban ward whangarei

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Statement from Jodie Rameka

I do oppose the sand mining in Bream Bay especially with the damage it would cause to our marine life, the increased risk of erosion along our coastlines and the benefits primarily going to the pockets of big businesses. I also believe that given the cultural significance for our mana whenua, it is important that their voices and the voices of the wider community are heard and respected. However, with the fast-track approval process moving for the consent of mining this limits the ability to do exactly that.

Jodie Rameka

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Statement from Adam Young

I am compelled to express my opposition to the McCallum Brothers Ltd Fast Track Application for the extraction of 8.5 million cubic metres of sand from Te Akau Bream Bay.

As a candidate, I believe it is essential to prioritize the long-term health of our marine ecosystems, coastal communities, and local economy.

The potential environmental impacts, as well as the implications for tourism and local livelihoods, raise serious concerns that outweigh any perceived economic benefits.

The recent Environment Court decision to deny a similar resource consent application at Mangawhai/Pakiri demonstrates an increasing recognition of the ecological and cultural damages associated with such developments.

Additionally, the development of manufactured sand in Auckland, which currently exceeds the proposed extraction volume, diminishes the economic justification for this project. I am committed to supporting sustainable development initiatives that uphold the well-being of our communities and preserve our natural environment.

No to Sand Mining

Thanks Adam Young

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Statement from Paul Yovich

Against - looks like everyone is against it

Kind regards

Paul Yovich

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