

Petition: Stop plans for an LNG import facility at Port Taranaki

Climate Justice Taranaki Submission to the Parliamentary Petitions Committee

19th October 2026

Introduction

1. Founded in 2010 and incorporated in 2015, Climate Justice Taranaki (CJT) is dedicated to environmental health and social justice. This includes issues of inter-generational equity, notably in relation to climate change, which impact current and future generations' inalienable rights to safe water, food and shelter. Our vision is underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the founding document of government in Aotearoa New Zealand.
2. Composed of a broad range of people with varied expertise and life experiences, CJT has engaged with the Government at all levels on numerous matters and submitted on many bills and policies.
3. On 22nd September 2026, our petition¹ – Stop plans for an LNG import facility at Port Taranaki – was presented to Parliament. Our petition request is that *“the House of Representatives urge the Government to withdraw its plan to enable an LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) import facility to be located and operational at Port Taranaki; and note that 1,769 people have signed a similar online petition”*².
4. Petition reason: *“We think the consequences of an LNG import facility in Port Taranaki could be catastrophic and are unacceptable to residents. We believe the process of shortlisting providers has been rushed and that potentially signing contracts close to an election and passing enabling legislation would be imprudent and undemocratic. Concept Consulting reported that the modelled need for LNG is low, even in scenarios with less other security resources. We feel there are alternatives to address 'dry-year risk’”*.
5. This submission explains and elaborates on the above reason, backed by materials and inputs from concerned residents (Annex 2), Taranaki Energy Watch (Annex 3), Lawyers for Climate Action (Annex 4), and published scientific literature.

Unacceptable safety risks and consequences

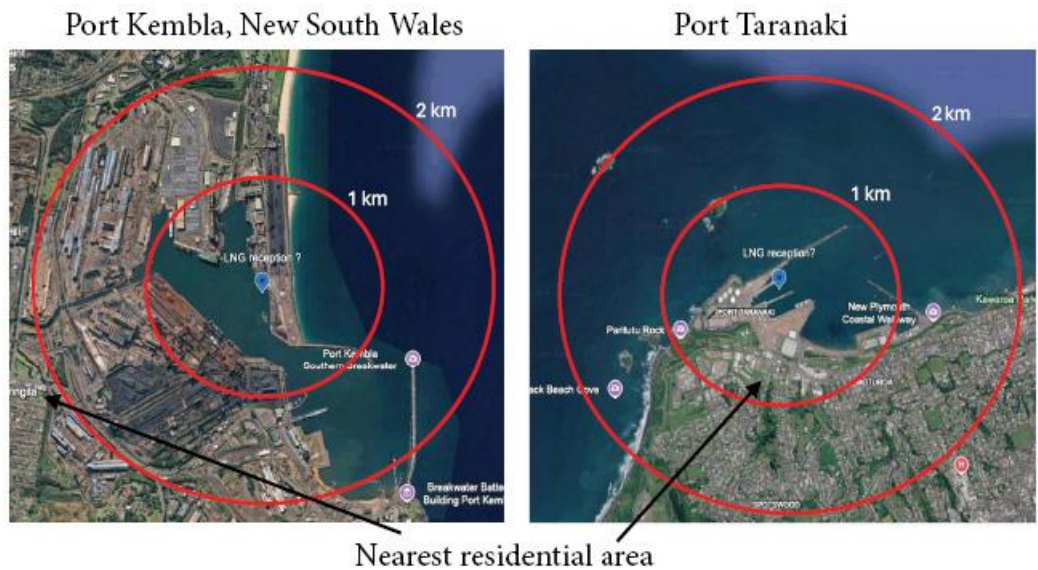
6. The low probability catastrophic consequences of having an LNG import facility in Port Taranaki are unacceptable.
7. At other major LNG import facilities overseas, such as Port Kembla in New South Wales, the worst-case fatality consequence of a flash fire extends to nearly 2 km. These are the low probability, high impact catastrophic events that are unacceptable to the people who live nearby, because they can be killed or severely harmed should an accident

¹ <https://petitions.parliament.nz/e30c377d-39de-403f-bd2e-08df06e830d6?lang=en>

² <https://community.greenpeace.org.nz/petitions/no-lng-import-facility-at-port-taranaki>

happen. The closest residential areas are about 2 km away from the LNG import facility in Port Kembla³. The homes near Port Taranaki are much closer.

8. On the 17th July 2026, Port Taranaki Chief Executive Simon Craddock wrote to nearby residents that the LNG facility would involve a floating storage and regasification vessel permanently moored along the Main Breakwater. Within 2 km are thousands of homes, around ten schools, pre-schools and childcare centres, and a popular beach.



9. Nowhere else in the world are new LNG import facilities allowed to be placed in such proximity to populated areas. “Safety is a critical consideration, and Port Taranaki cannot meet modern separation-distance requirements. LNG terminals are typically sited at least 2km from residential areas. At Port Taranaki, this is impossible”, explained Chris Beath, a former general manager of Shell Todd Oil Services⁴. Moreover, this issue has already been examined. A 2003 feasibility study for LNG at Port Taranaki was abandoned due to safety concerns.
10. Port Taranaki is exposed episodically to extreme weather and sea conditions, creating significant hazards requiring the Port to be closed because under such conditions large waves batter the outer breakwater, overtopping and washing into the Port (Annex 1). All reliable predictions are for significantly worsening conditions in future, as our disrupted climate creates more extreme and dangerous weather events. Taranaki is also subject to Southern Ocean long-period swells that can cause significant problems, potentially dangerous, for vessels near each other such as an LNG FSRU and a supply vessel.
11. The depth of water in Port Taranaki is insufficient to accommodate the FSRU and the supply vessel, both with about 12m draft. Very extensive and costly deepening of the harbour and strengthening and raising of the main breakwater would be required. The

³ https://squadronenergy.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Port-Kembla-Energy-Terminal/PDF/Statutory-Approvals/SQE_Final_Hazard_Analysis_approved.pdf

⁴ <https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/taranaki-daily-news/20260909/281595247413621>

geotechnical feasibility of this substantial civil engineering work in Port Taranaki does not appear to have been considered.

12. The four LNG import facilities cited by MBIE⁵ to demonstrate that they are safe to operate in urban areas are all fixed onshore terminals in calm or enclosed waters, not an FSRU to be moored in a port subject to wild storms and long-period swells. Of the four facilities that are cited by MBIE, three were built decades ago. The provision of such information by the Government is misleading⁶, if not deceitful (Annex 2).

Unacceptable process

13. On 21st July 2025⁷, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) presented to Cabinet a draft paper on *“a potential procurement framework for Crown investment in LNG imports”*, provided advice on alleviating the *“consequences of diminishing natural gas supplies”* and recommended *“a consolidated work programme and timeline for addressing the energy gap”*. Stage one of the procurement process was closed on 17 November 2025 with 25 registrations of interest⁸.
14. On 29th January 2026⁹, another MBIE Cabinet paper provided *“an overview of the six shortlisted options for an accelerated delivery solution for an LNG import facility; and sets out options for legislative design for the enabling legislation... Eight companies/proposals were shortlisted. As a next step, they were invited to submit a feasibility assessment to supply LNG facility services to New Zealand. This feasibility assessment is a key part of the process to sign a contract with a supplier of LNG facility services by mid 2026.”*
15. On 9th February 2026, the then Minister of Energy Simon Watts announced¹⁰: *“The Government has shortlisted leading proposals and is progressing to commercial contracting, with the aim of signing a contract by mid-2026. The facility could be operational as soon as 2027 or early 2028.”*
16. On the following day, 10th February, MBIE presented to Cabinet a December 2025 paper¹¹, laying out the case for proceeding with procurement of an LNG import facility and stating that *“An Enabling Liquefied Natural Gas Bill will be required to provide*

⁵ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/32061-lng-safety-and-environment-factsheet>

⁶ <https://www.thepost.co.nz/nz-news/361031696/fact-sheet-not-telling-whole-story-risks-new-plymouths-proposed-lng-terminal-watchdog-group-says>

⁷ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31681-procurement-framework-for-the-importation-of-liquefied-natural-gas-briefing-req-0017895>

⁸ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31754-government-investment-in-dry-year-risk-cover-consideration-of-an-lng-import-facility>

⁹ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/32045-briefing-reg-0026675-update-on-lng-shortlisted-options-and-legislative-design-proactiverelase-pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/delivering-lng-support-energy-security>

¹¹ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31754-government-investment-in-dry-year-risk-cover-consideration-of-an-lng-import-facility>

consents, approvals, and levy powers. Timing is tight [redacted section: Confidential advice to Government...] This will require high legislative priority and possibly urgency”.

17. On 26th March 2026¹², another Cabinet briefing from MBIE, also heavily redacted, described a proposal to progress the drafting of the **Enabling LNG Bill**, with the detail to be developed in regulation in 2027.
18. In June 2026, Radio NZ reported that official information released by MBIE following a complaint to the Ombudsman, showed there is “*low need*” for an LNG import facility, and in some scenarios, no LNG is needed at all¹³.
19. By then, the LNG proposal had been exempted from the new process which would allow the Infrastructure Commission, rather than the Treasury, to analyse all major government-funded infrastructure proposals to provide external investment assurance and scrutiny¹⁴. Infrastructure Minister Chris Bishop commented earlier¹⁵, “*It seems the modus operandi is to let investments move through the system and let bad projects gain momentum – until it’s too late – wasting tens or hundreds of millions of taxpayer money on business cases and early design and feasibility work for phantom projects.*”
20. Notably, the Infrastructure Commission had warned the Government to slow down on its LNG plan in a December 2025 memo¹⁶. The Commission said there were viable, less expensive alternatives that should be explored more thoroughly. Their senior advisors wrote, “*Our core feedback is to take the time needed to identify the right solution, not the most expedient one.*”
21. On 8th August 2026, along with ten other organisations including Consumer NZ, Sustainable Business Network, Lawyers for Climate Action, Taranaki Energy Watch and Community Energy Taranaki, CJT wrote to the Auditor General¹⁷ requesting an inquiry into the procurement process for the LNG import facility. We laid out the issues around the urgency of decision-making, cost recovery and lack of information and consultation with the local community.
22. To this date, the Government’s process with the LNG plan has lacked transparency and accountability. It took the Lawyers for Climate Action and the NZ Climate Foundation nearly six months, with an Ombudsman finding in their favour, to receive from MBIE an unredacted version of the Concept Consulting report, referenced by the Government as part of its decision to proceed with the LNG procurement plan. The Ombudsman found that the information redacted was contextual and MBIE should not have refused the

¹² <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/32046-briefing-reg-0029644-policy-decisions-for-the-enabling-lng-bill-tranche-two-facility-funding-model-proactiverelease-pdf>

¹³ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/597839/officials-redacted-advice-showing-low-need-for-lng-imports>

¹⁴ <https://newsroom.co.nz/2026/06/17/gas-imports-are-politically-explosive-yet-nz-gets-only-muted-bang-for-its-buck/>

¹⁵ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/speech-ap%C5%8Dp%C5%8D-congress-2026>

¹⁶ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/environment/614143/infrastructure-commission-warned-govt-to-slow-down-on-lng-plans>

¹⁷ <https://www.lawyersforclimateaction.nz/news-events/letter-to-the-auditor-general-regarding-the-lng-facility>

request; the withholding ground was not clear; and that there is a public interest in the information being released, considering the accountability required in the expenditure of public funds, and in particular in an election year¹⁸. The unredacted report was released by MIBIE on the 12th August 2026.

23. Furthermore, in September 2026, the Lawyers for Climate Action had to file yet another complaint to the Ombudsman because MBIE refused to release information it holds on the health and safety implications of an LNG import facility¹⁹. The information relates to the initial safety evaluations prepared by the two shortlisted bidders, together with any associated health and safety information held by MBIE. Clearly, such information affects how local communities understand, assess and decide on their level of risk acceptance. Without this, there is no meaningful contribution from the communities, especially people who could be directly affected.
24. As the Ombudsman found in the initial investigation, this *“being a general-election year adds to the importance of the accountability and transparency of the current government. It heightens the interest in knowing more about the rationale behind the quality of the government’s decision making, which could help to inform the public on how they wish to vote, in order to shape the New Zealand government beyond this year.”*
25. On 23rd September 2026²⁰, it was revealed that the decision to sign a contract for the LNG facility before the 7th November 2026 election was halted. NZ First leader Winston Peters was reported to have said, *“The Cabinet position was not to make a decision today...”* Act leader and deputy prime minister David Seymour was quoted, *“I don’t know that a deal is possible before the election...”*
26. Along with Taranaki Energy Watch and many residents and others who are opposed to the LNG import plan, our group certainly welcomed the news²¹. However, we remain deeply concerned about the Government’s intention to force such a major, hazardous and costly energy infrastructure project through, with the Enabling Bill highly likely to be passed under urgency if they are re-elected.
27. Such rushed Enabling legislation would bypass normal Resource Management Act process. It would not allow thorough assessment of safety risks and consequences, environmental impacts, cost-benefit comparisons with alternatives, or meaningful public inputs.
28. In a letter dated 2nd October 2026²², the Auditor-General declined our requested inquiry, stating *“as the Government is yet to decide the approach it will take and select a provider, we do not propose carrying out inquiry work now”*. The Auditor-General

¹⁸ <https://www.lawyersforclimateaction.nz/news-events/lng-import-facility-mbies-lng-redactions-revealed-after-an-ombudsman-investigation>

¹⁹ <https://www.lawyersforclimateaction.nz/news-events/ombudsmanhealthandsafetycomplaint>

²⁰ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/1537112/decision-on-lng-terminal-delayed>

²¹ <https://www.pressreader.com/new-zealand/taranaki-daily-news/20260925/281479283332950>

²² <https://ao.parliament.nz/2026/lng-terminal>

remains interested and is expecting MBIE to do its due diligence on a wide range of matters from comparative analysis with alternatives to economic, operational and environmental risk assessments, before a decision is made.

29. Yet a Radio NZ story²³ on the 15th October 2026 revealed, “*The Government has instructed MBIE to progress discussions with a preferred provider, with a view to making a decision after the election*” (MBIE website accessed on 15th Oct 2026)²⁴. The plan to have an FSRU moored along the Main Breakwater of Port Taranaki has been confirmed. Clearly MBIE has somehow convinced the Auditor-General that substantive work was still to be done before proceeding with the LNG procurement, hence the inquiry was not justified. Yet MBIE is already talking to the preferred company while continuing to hold crucial information from the public, despite the clear evidence of substantial interest and concern^{25, 26}.
30. Such a major, multi-decadal and hazardous fossil fuel infrastructure project ought to be scrutinised through an open, transparent process involving the public and independent experts, with sufficient time allowed to formulate a decision in a bipartisan manner, based on the most robust and unbiased information.

Unacceptable costs and market volatility

31. The cost of the LNG infrastructure is estimated to be between \$90-180 million per annum for 15-20 years, excluding the LNG cost itself²⁷. At \$180 million per annum for 15 years, this would add up to \$2.7 billion, without the LNG cost. According to the Boston Consulting Group report (November, 2025)²⁸ commissioned by the four largest gentailers, treating “*LNG as a system-wide insurance policy, with costs socialised rather than borne by individual users*” is necessary, otherwise LNG supply would be “*prohibitively expensive*.”
32. The 9th February 2026 ministerial briefing included a fact sheet on LNG²⁹. The fact sheet states that the annual cost of providing and operating the LNG, regardless of whether NZ uses the facility or not, “*will be paid for via a levy on electricity. The levy for the infrastructure is paying for the insurance that LNG provides. It is therefore appropriate that the electricity system bears this cost.*” The costs of the LNG itself, including processing and transport would be paid by users.

²³ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/environment/1682609/auditor-general-won-t-investigate-lng-yet-but-remains-interested-in-govt-plans>

²⁴ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/energy-and-natural-resources/energy-generation-and-markets/gas-market/lng-in-new-zealand>

²⁵ <https://climatejusticetaranaki.info/2026/05/30/press-release-new-plymouth-residents-say-no-to-lng/>

²⁶ <https://climatejusticetaranaki.info/2026/07/31/panui-august-2026/>

²⁷ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31754-government-investment-in-dry-year-risk-cover-consideration-of-an-lng-import-facility>

²⁸ <https://web-assets.bcg.com/27/08/7fcb68024dcc92f2ba01527e8623/energy-to-grow-full-report.pdf>

²⁹ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2026-02/2026%20Fact%20sheet%20-%20LNG%20Procurement.pdf>

33. The then Energy Minister Simon Watts said³⁰, *“Just having a reliable back up is expected to save Kiwis around \$265 million per annum by reducing price spikes and lowering the risk premium built into power bills that exist because of supply challenges, equivalent to around \$50 per annum per household.”*
34. But such claims were based on comparing LNG import with four other scenarios³¹ involving building new or converting existing fossil fuel power plants using coal/biomass, diesel or natural gas, while excluding the option of overbuilding renewable energy generation to address dry-year and peaking issues by freeing up hydro storage.
35. With our dwindling domestic gas supply, despite over \$1.5 billion having been spent on drilling 53 wells since 2020, there is a chance that LNG becomes the primary source of fossil gas rather than a ‘backstop’ if the import facility eventuates. The cost of LNG is at least double that of domestic fossil gas and is subject to geopolitical pressure such as the US/Israeli attack on Iran which reduced global LNG supply by 20% overnight³², and the Russian invasion of Ukraine which doubled the LNG price³³.
36. On 28th February 2026, the Israel-US war on Iran was launched. It led to **huge price spikes of LNG** associated with the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and damage of LNG production facilities. *“It’s a huge risk for the New Zealand economy to be exposing even more of our energy system to volatile international prices... and that risk analysis does deserve a re-think and we should be pivoting towards more stable, domestic energy sources,”* said independent climate policy analyst Christina Hood³⁴. Another analyst warned that the LNG import facility could become a very expensive white elephant. Indeed, exposure to price shocks has been a documented risk of proceeding with the LNG import plan all along.
37. By the end of March 2026, LNG prices had risen by 143 percent in Asia and at least two gentailers were expressing doubts about the Government’s LNG import plan³⁵.
38. On 9th June 2026, the new Energy Minister Simeon Brown announced that the Government had backed down on the plan to pay for the LNG infrastructure with a levy³⁶ on electricity users and would engage with the gentailers on *“a fair funding model”*,

³⁰ <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/delivering-lng-support-energy-security>

³¹ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/31754-government-investment-in-dry-year-risk-cover-consideration-of-an-lng-import-facility> .

³² <https://www.oxfordenergy.org/publications/the-iran-war-and-disruption-to-lng-supply-from-the-persian-gulf/>

³³ <https://newsroom.co.nz/2026/02/10/why-the-new-lng-terminal-could-raise-not-lower-your-power-bill/>

³⁴ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/588438/conflict-in-iran-shows-risk-of-government-s-plan-to-import-lng-as-back-up-to-taranaki-facility>

³⁵ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/591117/war-on-iran-a-bazooka-through-government-s-lng-plan-gentailer-ceo>

³⁶ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/597626/government-backs-down-on-levy-to-fund-new-lng-import-terminal>

presumably under mounting public pressure and criticisms. But the question remains as to how the costs would be paid for and by whom³⁷.

39. Notably, the Concept Consulting report, released unredacted³⁸ in August 2026, revealed that there is a “*risk that local gas prices might increase up to LNG prices and increase average electricity prices*” and there are other resources that “*can provide a similar system security service to LNG*”.
40. To be clear, when there are better alternatives, it is foolhardy to proceed with an expensive new fossil fuel infrastructure project with multi-decadal economic, societal and environmental implications, not least the volatile cost burden on all New Zealanders.

LNG is unnecessary and undesirable

41. Considering the above, the Government’s key argument that LNG import is needed to address the ‘dry year risk’ is weak, if not unfounded.
42. In March 2026, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment wrote to Simon Watts, outlining his concerns about the Government’s LNG import plan. The Commissioner noted³⁹, “*that decisions of this scale must articulate clear objectives and be supported by evidence. The central question he raises is: how can New Zealand improve domestic energy security without building a new fossil fuel path dependency that undermines our emissions objectives?*”
43. In May 2026, Meridian chief executive Mike Roan told the Parliamentary Transport and Infrastructure Committee,⁴⁰ “*from everything we can see, the analysis shows dry-year risk is being managed through the next 10 years.*” In other words, LNG “*is not necessary from an electricity perspective.*” Contact Energy chief executive Mike Fuge also said that the risk of a future dry year event has shrunk due to increased solar generation in summer and extra baseload from geo-thermal plants, helping to keep the hydro lakes full for longer⁴¹. More wind energy generation is also coming on-stream.
44. The OECD Economic Surveys on New Zealand (May 2026)⁴² advised:

“*Subject to a normalisation of international markets, gas and LNG can help manage short-term security risks. However, they are not a long-term affordability solution and risk locking in fossil-fuel dependence and would further exacerbate New Zealand’s already high vulnerability to liquid fuel import stoppages and price volatility. Breaking*

³⁷ <https://thespinoff.co.nz/politics/10-06-2026/the-lng-levy-is-dead-but-who-will-pay-remains-a-mystery>

³⁸ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/693b57547d6e0b49e1da3eec/t/6a7d3b256bc32973ee6e9a90/1786592037160/Sliddeck+-+Released+in+full.pdf>

³⁹ <https://pce.parliament.nz/publications/letter-to-minister-watts-on-the-importation-of-lng/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/596723/lng-imports-not-needed-for-dry-year-cover-meridian-says>

⁴¹ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/595686/contact-energy-boss-says-risk-of-new-zealand-running-out-of-power-this-winter-eases>

⁴² https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2026/05/oecd-economic-surveys-new-zealand-2026_27daa8d8/3ec5de98-en.pdf

the gas–electricity price link requires rapidly scaling non-gas seasonal (dry-year) firming, such as biomass, pumped hydro and geothermal. This could be supported by Crown minority co-investment to overcome structurally weak investment incentives.”

45. The Sapere report (June 2026)⁴³ commissioned by Rewiring Aotearoa concluded that LNG is *“not the best solution for dry year cover and is a bad long-term option for gas users facing a domestic shortage.”* Instead, it recommends:

“Enabling investment in renewables for dry-year firming with diesel a superior short-term bridge.

Accelerating industrial businesses transitioning from gas to electricity for process heat. Creating firm-energy contracts that unlock dry-year investment.”

46. In September 2026, the country’s largest fossil gas user, Methanex announced its closure by February 2027 and agreement to sell substantially all of its NZ fossil gas contractual entitlements from the first quarter of 2027 through to the end of the decade⁴⁴.
47. Methanex’s closure will greatly reduce the gas shortage and provide more time for transition to renewables, storage and demand management measures. For example, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA)⁴⁵ is *“investing in five new wood energy aggregation facilities to secure low-grade wood from commercial forestry alongside the private sector... Once operational, the sites will have a combined capacity to process 200,000 tonnes per year of wood chip fuel – enough to supply around 2 petajoules (PJ) of energy annually...”*
48. Energy analyst Steve Goldthorpe noted that *“there is likely to be adequate gas supply for power generation in the near term without importing LNG.”* As the convenor of Sustainable Energy Forum, Goldthorpe dedicated the entire Energy Watch (August 2026) newsletter to LNG import⁴⁶. The article challenged MBIE’s figure of 3 TWh dry-year generation shortfall and stated that 1.5 TWh would be a more credible figure. Such a shortfall could be met by increased renewable generation and ring-fencing two of the three Rankine units at Huntly and a stockpile of 650,000 tonnes of coal. The latter could be gradually replaced by black torrefied wood pellets from NZ forestry. The Energy Watch article also pointed out that the only country able to supply large-scale LNG on demand is the USA, and *“LNG sourced from the USA can have a greater overall greenhouse gas footprint than coal.”*

⁴³ <https://www.rewiring.nz/news/media-release-new-sapere-report-shows-lng-import-terminal-is-a-short-term-reaction-with-long-term-consequences>

⁴⁴ <https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/09/02/methanex-to-close-taranaki-plant-citing-decline-in-gas-supply/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.eeca.govt.nz/about/news-and-events/news/untapped-wood-from-forestry-to-help-fuel-new-zealand-industry/>

⁴⁶ https://www.energywatch.org.nz/issues/EW87_8-2026.pdf

49. The WWF report *Keeping the lights on* (September 2026)⁴⁷ pointed out that many of the Government's messages to support its policy direction for lifting the offshore oil and gas exploration ban, and bringing in LNG import, "*are not supported by the evidence, and all omit critical context*". The report finds that, "*taken together, these unsupported claims and omissions amount to **climate misinformation***."
50. It is clear that importing LNG for electricity generation and gas users is **contrary to our international climate obligations** and is therefore undesirable. New Zealand, being a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement⁴⁸, has the obligation to lower, rather than increase, its emissions to keep the global average temperature well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.
51. Importing LNG and prolonging NZ's reliance on fossil gas is also contrary to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as Māori are disproportionately affected by climate change and the associated impacts. The ongoing Waitangi Tribunal Climate Change Priority Inquiry Wai 3325⁴⁹ has been examining statements around whether the Crown's response to climate change is consistent with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. As part of the inquiry, claimant Emily Tuhi-Ao Bailey on behalf of herself and Climate Justice Taranaki (Wai 3262) recently made our closing submissions⁵⁰, with strong argument for a swift transition off fossil fuels and other actions laid out in Toitū Taranaki 2030⁵¹.
52. Other environmental effects such as dredging to make Port Taranaki deep enough for the FSRU and LNG supply vessel (Annex 1), the discharge of super cooled water during LNG regasification and the chlorine content of the discharged water, generated through electrolysis for anti-fouling, are also undesirable. A case in point, the AGL Crib Point LNG import proposal was scrapped in 2021 following a determination by Victoria's Minister for Planning that the project would have unacceptable environmental effects⁵². In CJT's view, the proposed Enabling legislation would not allow for proper assessment of effects, including adequate inputs from independent experts.
53. In the wider context, humanity globally has breached seven of the nine planetary boundaries⁵³ beyond which the safety and functioning of societies are at risks, let alone energy and economy. We are already seeing the early results of climate breakdown, ecological collapse, ocean acidification, disruption of water cycles, and others. The interplay of such problems is creating a polycrisis that we cannot ignore, but that we

⁴⁷ <https://wwwf.org.nz/news/climate-change/keeping-lights>

⁴⁸ <https://environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/international-action/about-the-paris-agreement/>

⁴⁹ https://www.climatecasechart.com/document/wai-3325-climate-change-priority-inquiry_1e52

⁵⁰ <https://climatejusticetaranaki.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/2026-10-09-closings-submissions-on-behalf-of-wai-3262-cjt.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://climatejusticetaranaki.info/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/toitu-taranaki-2030-just-transition-community-strategy-apr21-web.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.upstreamonline.com/lng/australian-liquefied-natural-gas-import-project-cancelled/2-1-1005418>

⁵³ <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries.html>

need to tackle with care. Priority needs to be given to restoring and regenerating ecological and social wellbeing while substantially reducing our energy and material throughput. Given strict biophysical limits and other realities⁵⁴, we “*need to plan for less, not like-for-like replacement of the fossil economy*” and it is the Government’s responsibility to invest in the right things⁵⁵.

Conclusion and request

54. The risks and consequences of an LNG import facility in Port Taranaki are unacceptable. The planning and procurement process, including the proposed Enabling legislation are imprudent and undemocratic. The Government’s claims used to justify the LNG import plan are false or misleading while conflicting evidence is ignored or understated. Forcing such a major fossil fuel import project through would lock New Zealand into volatile international fuel prices, derail our emissions reduction pathway and contradict NZ’s international climate obligations.
55. Climate Justice Taranaki and those who have signed our community petition⁵⁶ request the Petitions Committee and House of Representatives to **urge the Government to withdraw its plan to enable an LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) import facility at Port Taranaki.**
56. We request the Committee to encourage the Government to instead invest in and enable viable alternatives to the ‘dry-year’ risk while fostering an energy transition that is equitable, resilient and regenerative.

⁵⁴ <https://realityofeverything.org/>

⁵⁵ <https://energyandresilience.substack.com/p/counting-the-debt-not-the-diesel>

⁵⁶ <https://community.greenpeace.org.nz/petitions/no-lng-import-facility-at-port-taranaki>

Annex 1. Issues with Port Taranaki re LNG

There are several critical issues in respect of the suitability of Port Taranaki for importing LNG.

1. Dredging

As energy analyst Steve Goldthorpe noted in respect of operations of LNG transfer in Port Taranaki⁵⁷:

"The complete berthing, connection, LNG transfer and disconnection process, including all the necessary safety protocols, takes 24 to 36 hours, which is 2 to 3 tidal cycles. The drafts of loaded FSRU vessels and ocean-going LNG tankers are about 12 metres. To avoid those vessels grounding at low tide, extensive excavation of the north side of the harbour adjacent to the main breakwater would be required."

The present depth of the Port is not sufficient for the large LNG tankers to safely operate across tidal cycles. Excavation additional to maintenance dredging will be required to create a basin with a depth of 13 meters at low tide to accommodate an FSRU and a visiting LNG carrier for the LNG delivery process.

Steve Goldthorpe estimated that the amount of material needing to be removed from the harbour would be about 400,000 cubic metres. Without such additional excavation, entry, manoeuvring and exiting of the LNG carrier would be limited to operation at high tide.

2. Extreme weather

Additional to, and interacting with, these considerations of the necessary depth for access, the Port is exposed episodically to extreme weather and sea conditions, creating significant hazards requiring the Port to be closed, as reported, for example in Stuff in 2016⁵⁸.

"Port Taranaki closed as stormy weather brings big swell to the region"



⁵⁷ https://www.energywatch.org.nz/issues/EW87_8-2026.pdf

⁵⁸ <https://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/80253726/port-taranaki-closed-as-stormy-weather-brings-big-swell-to-the-region>

Photo: Robert Charles / FAIRFAX NZ (previous page)

Under such conditions large waves batter the outer breakwater, overtopping and washing into the Port, as illustrated in this Stuff photo.

Taranaki's ocean wave climate is dominated by energetic, long-period westerly–south westerly swells of 13–15 seconds period, combined with shorter-period south westerly wind-seas of around 8 seconds. These result from the region's high exposure to swells generated by persistent strong winds over long fetches in the Southern Ocean, as well as local storm-associated wind-seas. Additionally, extra-tropical cyclones and low pressure systems enter the Tasman Sea, creating large swells from the North-west to South-west.

Another example, from May 2023, as Port Taranaki reported⁵⁹:

"High winds, a storm surge, and long period waves are predicted for the region ... as an intensifying low-pressure system tracks across the Tasman Sea towards the North Island.

"We expect high north-east winds of 50 knots, a north-west swell of 5.2m, and an extreme long period wave event which, combined, means for safety reasons we have made the decision to exclude commercial vessels from the port from 6pm today," Port Taranaki general manager operations Alex Park said. ... *"The weather is what the weather is,"* said Nick Jackson, director of Elemental Group, which is providing project management assistance of New Zealand operations for Helix Energy Solutions.

Indeed, *'the weather is what the weather is'*, but all reliable predictions are for significantly worsening conditions in future, as **our disrupted climate creates more extreme weather events**.

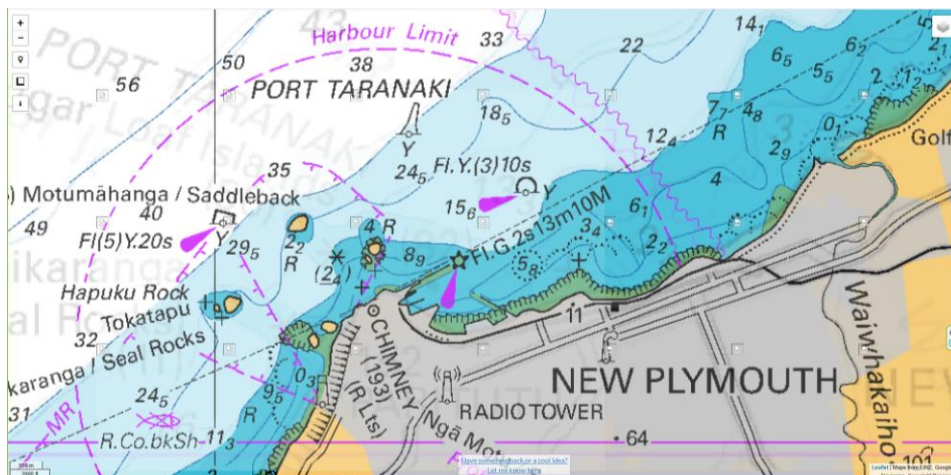
An FSRU and LNG supply vessel are not just at risk from wave height — they are at risk from the long-period ground swell motion that acts on the entire hull through the water column, causing the vessels to move relative to each other even in conditions that might not look alarming on a surface wave-height gauge.

All other recently built LNG import and export terminals have been built in Ports that are well sheltered from such events. Port Taranaki would be an extreme outlier. Presumably the outer breakwaters would require significant strengthening to minimize such impacts, given the time needed to transfer the LNG.

3. Bathymetry

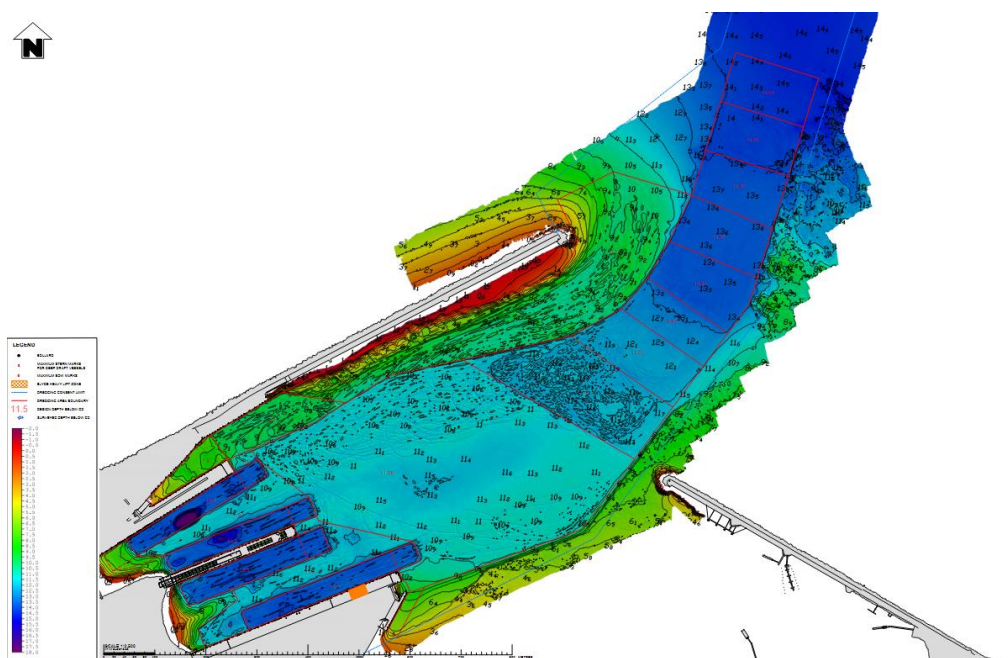
A related consideration is the complex offshore bathymetry, with nautical charts indicating shallow rocky reefs that could pose an additional hazard to the large LNG tankers, particularly in rough sea conditions. An overview of the local bathymetry is provided below, followed by a more detailed bathymetry of the Port entrance.

⁵⁹ <https://www.porttaranaki.co.nz/news/helix-q7000-ready-for-departure-ahead-of-storm>



NZ Marine Charts.

<https://wetmaps.co.nz/#14/-39.0486/174.0464>



<https://www.porttaranaki.co.nz/assets/Documents-for-downloads/Marine/Bathymetric-Survey.pdf>

Annex 2. Concerns of residents

Brenda Fawkner

I am a resident, living together with several thousand other people in the area considered to be the LNG exclusion zone of the proposed terminal. In this area there are two hospitals, ten schools and education centres, shops and restaurants. This development at the port is totally unacceptable as it places this community at risk. Accidents have happened and many near misses over the years that have been recorded. Information given minimizes the danger of the placement at this port. It falls short of the requirement of a calm and enclosed harbour for a FSRU operation.

There has been no public consultation with the community. The examples given by MBIE as evidence operating in an urban area are misleading. It cites four ports that cannot and do not compare to Taranaki's Port.

Boston, USA is a **fixed onshore terminal not a FSRU** it is on a calm enclosed river, encroachment of residences has occurred and they are now seeking closure with US Dept of Energy estimating within 20 seconds there would be 80,000 deaths in a major incident.

Fezzano, Italy also has a **fixed onshore terminal not a FSRU**, it is situated in a sheltered and protected mountain gulf.

Pyeongtaek, Korea is also a **fixed onshore terminal not a FSRU**. on an enclosed sea not a southern Ocean swell.

Barcelona, Spain is also a **fixed onshore terminal not a FSRU**. The port covers 7.86km² in the calm Mediterranean Sea.

Why would MBIE compare these ports to ours? I consider this to be disingenuous. The question I have is why the citizens of New Plymouth are being deceived? With alternative solar, wind, geothermal power rapidly increasing there is no sense in risking a community.

Margy-Jean Malcolm

We can achieve better long term resilience for jobs, households, business, affordable power and the planet by investing in our own indigenous, renewable energy solutions. Supporting households and businesses to transition to renewables should be our priority focus – look what our Aussie neighbours have achieved with proactive government policy!

Making a just transition to renewables makes us more self-reliant in a very unstable global context and supports us to fast track towards addressing our very real climate change challenges. And as the UN envoy (Selwin Hart) said to the April conference in Columbia of over 50 nations committed to transitioning away from fossil fuels said: "Renewables offer something fossil fuels never did: security and sovereignty. There are no embargoes, price shocks or tariffs."

Instead, **we have an expensive short term solution with long term financial and environmental consequences, including heightened fossil fuel dependency.** As Sapere's report for RA says, LNG facility locks businesses dependent on gas into a volatile, high-cost fuel and may require future governments to subsidise an unknown LNG price for an unknown number of businesses for an unknown time. It's an uncapped liability.

There is no agreement that we have an immediate 'dry year' problem according to many respected industry sources (Meridian, Contact Energy, MBIE report) but diversifying our options does make sense.

There are other alternative solutions which together can create a short-term bridge – including diesel, imported coal which are not ideal but require less capital investment, and provide lower actual fuel cost. And building black wood pellets at Huntly sounds to me even better. It would require hugely less capital investment, can produce fuel at more like a 1/3 of the LNG cost, and with zero carbon emissions. And it addresses the forestry slash problem at the same time!

Government is pressing on with this project with **NO meaningful engagement with residents impacted and NO upfront health, safety and environmental impact assessments** and doesn't seem to be valuing other perspectives. **So where is the social licence to proceed? Where is the space for real dialogue if this initiative is to be pushed through even faster than the fast track Bill would expect?**

I live in the residential area that would be affected if there was 'low probably, high impact' catastrophic LNG accident, but I am even more concerned for other residents nearer by, including schools, the new marae being built and recreational users right on the breakwater. Beyond the risks to people and property, **I want to know more about the marine and coastal environment risks.** Massive amounts of seawater are used to warm up the – 162 degree LNG to gas for piping. **What happens to the ocean** when the seawater used to warm up the -162 degree LNG is pumped back into the sea and with what toxic chemicals?

As you can see. I am not keen on it being in anyone's backyard, but if it is going to be in ours – **Where is the health, safety, social and environmental risk analysis factored into this "business case"?**

Finally, I urge the government to respect our questions and concerns with genuine curiosity, LISTENING and spaces for meaningful dialogue. Slow the process down to find robust, long-term solutions, not quick fix ones rushed through before the election at any cost - to our environment, our mokopuna, us as taxpayers, businesses and workers.

We need **leadership to enable a just transition to a sustainable, self-reliant, future:** fast tracking us away from fossil fuel dependency and into the adoption of renewable energy and economic diversification that will achieve better outcomes for residents, workers, businesses or communities, now and especially for future generations who must be at the forefront of our decision-making.

Rob Green, retired oil and gas worker

What concerns me most is the risks that are involved with this... if there is a huge blast that goes off in there, I'm straight in the blast zone. There is nothing between me and the Port...

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/06/14/some-new-plymouth-residents-anxious-over-lng-terminal-near-homes/>

For me, safety element is the big thing, until I see that risk assessment and quantitative risk assessment, I'm not convinced that we should be proceeding with and unsafe project. That seems to be silly to me to be signing onto a project... not proved safe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tW7IZ-GNMQU>

Patrick Medlicott B Sc, MB ChB, FRACS, FNZOA. (retired)

The current coalition government has stated that there is a need for a liquified natural Gas terminal (LNG) in New Zealand to import gas to use for industry and to address the “*Dry Year*” problem caused by low lake levels on the South Island because of our rapidly depleting “*Natural Gas*” fields and the need for energy (Electricity). “*Natural Gas*” is felt to be a “*Bridging Fuel*” on the way to renewable clean energy which causes much fewer emissions of CO₂ and methane than Coal and other high emission fuels. The coalition believe that the previous government coalition caused this by stopping new exploration licenses for oil and Gas which has no basis in fact but is always mentioned in communication.

New Zealand is a lucky country as it has multiple sources of clean energy in hydro, solar and wind and geothermal energy. These can be developed further at less expense than Fossil fuel sources. We are already close to 70 to 80% renewable energy. Mike Casey of Rewiring Aotearoa has demonstrated this. Rapid uptake of rooftop Solar both Residential and commercial could compensate for the Dry year especially if Batteries were deployed at scale. I have said previously, “*What do Farmers have?*” Lots of roofs. If these all had solar and Batteries, we would not need LNG and in most cases other Fossil fuel derivatives except in very few situations likely soon solved by technology advances. Hannah Ritchie “*Our world in data*” (OWID).

Money would be much better spent and less of it needed to deploy these sources and as a By-Product we would be lowering emissions of greenhouse gases, which would help us avoid their global effects and their local NZ effects.

It is ironic that the effect of greenhouse gases on the planet has been known for 100 years and even more ironic that 50 years ago Scientists working for Fossil Fuel companies were some of the first to document what their emissions would do to the climate over time. Not surprisingly they were ignored by their bosses as to use a rather poor metaphor “*Money Trumps everything*”.

Some years ago, I did a course at Victoria University called “*Climate change and New Zealand society*” and since then have done a similar course at Canterbury University. As part of the

VUW course an essay was required. My essay was about why the climate Crisis would not be solved unless we got onto a “*War Footing*” because Westminster style politics and Neoliberal capitalism will always prevent nations addressing the Climate crisis. There is nothing since that has altered my opinion and our emissions continue to rise both here and elsewhere on planet Earth despite most people listening to their Scientists, believing there is an existential problem and wanting some action from politicians.

Bill McKibben (b.1960) who wrote the first mainstream book on Global warming in 1989 “*The End of Nature*” and co-founded 350.org and since then has written many books on the subject and is the Schuman distinguished scholar in environmental sciences and an elected Fellow of the American academy of arts and sciences reports today (10/10/26) on LNG exports to Asia the region where big oil has been insisting will sustain its growth far into the future: “*Stung by high costs and supply uncertainty, Asian governments are busy throwing those forecasts on the bonfire.*” The governments of Thailand, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Vietnam are recasting their forecasts on LNG to renewables due to price hikes and supply uncertainty due to Wars in the middle east and their consequences. Why New Zealand wants to go down the LNG track is incomprehensible.

There is no need to be burning further fossil fuels in New Zealand.

LNG is expensive, fraught with potential hazards to our citizens, highly explosive when mishandled, polluting to the air we breathe and damaging to our environment as are all fossil fuels in the short and long term. (Some 8 million people die per year from fossil fuel air pollution worldwide U.N.) Locally it will compromise a wonderful amenity such as Ngāmotu beach which is still free to use and safe for our mokopuna.

Please consider our mokopuna when making LNG decisions not the short-term GDP effect. I am 80 and will not be around for ever so have nothing to gain from writing this submission. Continuing to burn Fossil Fuels however I believe is a wilful betrayal of Intergenerational equity. Unfortunately, nobody will be held to account for prioritising money before the health and welfare of those yet unborn. Maybe there is a God?

ANNEX 3.

Proposed LNG import terminal at Port Taranaki Comments

Taranaki Energy Watch

19 October 2026

Proposed LNG import terminal at Port Taranaki comments

Taranaki Energy Watch -19 October 2026

1. Taranaki Energy Watch (TEW) is a long-standing grass roots community group based in Taranaki. We have participated over many decades in submissions and hearings (council and Environment Court) on district and regional plans and resource consents relating to energy matters (predominantly oil and gas) in our own province and to national legislation on similar.
2. Sarah Roberts is the spokesperson and has been involved with TEW since 2014. TEW has focused on hazardous facilities including oil and gas facilities and land use planning. They have legal, planning, risk and air expert representation for many years in a number of Environment Court hearings, 2 are currently ongoing.

Major Hazardous Facilities context

3. WorkSafe publishes annual reports relating to major hazardous facilities, petroleum and geothermal facilities.¹ The most recent report was in February 2026 and covers the 2024-2025 years. This report shows the distribution of the hazardous facilities in New Zealand with 42 located in Taranaki (Appendix A).²
4. There are several major hazardous facilities (MHF) located in Taranaki.³ These include AICA NZ Limited 149 Corbett Road Bell Block Upper Tier Type 3; several tank farms (Omata and Paritutu tank farms (OMV, Methanex and Todd Energy)) in Centennial Drive Omata New Plymouth Upper Tier Type 1; Methanex Main North Road Motunui Waitara Upper Tier Type 3; Methanex Mamuku Road Waitara Upper Tier Level 1; Methanex Breakwater (Port Taranaki) Upper Tier Type 1; Liquigas Hutchen Place Port Taranaki Upper Tier Type 1; Ballance Agri-Nutrients 309 Palmer Road Kapuni Upper Tier Type 3, and Fonterra, 85 Whareroa Road Hawera

¹ <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/major-hazard-facilities/publications/>

² Appendix A. WS report – MHF, petroleum and geothermal 2024-2025.

³ <https://services.worksafe.govt.nz/mhf-public-register/>

Lower Tier Type 1. These sites are situated in areas where there is no or limited residential housing or were developed in previous decades and residential encroachment has happened in these areas.

5. Accidents can and do happen. WorkSafe states that “many major accidents have taken place in the chemical and petrochemical industry over the past 40 years.”⁴

Port Taranaki and major hazardous facilities

6. Within a 2-kilometre distance of Port Taranaki there are several thousand people, many schools and businesses. The existing major hazardous facilities Liquigas and Methanex currently operate at the port. The Paritutu tank farms are nearby with the Omata tank farms located beyond these.
7. In the recent proposed New Plymouth District Plan hearings Liquigas (an existing major hazardous facility) provided the Council with a quantitative risk assessment (QRA). This showed the fatality risk contours which were mapped and identified the worst-case fatality consequence to 661 metres.^{5 6} Methanex (Breakwater Road) did not.
8. In a Council hearing, TEW risk expert evidence identified that Methanex had a potential fire and explosion consequence of 150-200m from the methanol storage tanks at Port Taranaki and was located approximately 750 metres from the Seaport application for proposed apartments (Fonterra cool stores).⁷

⁴ High Hazards and Petroleum and Geothermal team- A Year in review 2023/24 at p.12.
<https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/major-hazard-facilities/publications/> published Dec 2024

⁵ Appendix B. New Plymouth LPG Depot Quantitative Risk Assessment Figure 6-1 Risk Contour for the New Plymouth LPG Depot at digital p.20.

⁶ Appendix C. New Plymouth LPG Depot Quantitative Risk Assessment in Table 1 Release Rates and LFL Dispersion Distances at digital p.53.

⁷ Appendix D. Sherpa Ref: 21007-LET-001 NEW PLYMOUTH DRAFT Comments of land use safety planning and risk issues, proposed development of land at 20 Hakirau Street, Seaport, New Plymouth dated 26 June 2020 at Table 1: Potential effects from hazardous facilities.

9. TEW's evidence also identified the fatality risk and consequences from Liquigas.

⁸ The application at this time was declined.

10. The Paritutu and Omata tank farms risks and consequences are currently being considered by the Environment Court as part of the proposed New Plymouth District Plan. TEW is a participant in this process.⁹

Proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import terminal in Port Taranaki

11. Radio NZ reported the following on 15 October 2026.¹⁰

MBIE confirmed to RNZ that the government had instructed it to progress discussions with one preferred provider.

"While a final contract won't be signed before the election, work continues at pace."

MBIE's updated information also confirmed the provider's proposal was for a floating storage and regasification unit - essentially a large tanker that would be moored alongside the main breakwater at Port Taranaki.

It would receive shipments of super-cooled LNG and convert it back to gas for ordinary use.

12. TEW has used an example from New South Wales to demonstrate the worst-case fatality consequences (low probability, high impact catastrophic event) of the proposed LNG import terminal in Port Taranaki. It is generally accepted by risk experts that the fatality consequences are 2 kilometres for a 4 petajoule cargo.

⁸ Appendix D. Sherpa Ref: 21007-LET-001 NEW PLYMOUTH DRAFT Comments of land use safety planning and risk issues, proposed development of land at 20 Hakirau Street, Seaport, New Plymouth dated 26 June 2020 Table 1: Potential effects from hazardous facilities.

⁹ <https://proposeddistrictplan.npdc.govt.nz/>

¹⁰ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/politics/1915808/government-quietly-selects-liquefied-natural-gas-provider>

Port Kembla has developed an LNG import terminal which was referenced by the coalition government.¹¹ It is like what is being proposed in Port Taranaki.

13. The worst-case event is a full-bore (FB) catastrophic rupture and was modelled in the Final Hazard Analysis Report for Port Kembla LNG terminal in October 2023. It was completed by Worley Parsons, required by the New South Wales legislation and publicly available. The worst-case scenario is identified as a flash fire scenario full-bore rupture at 1984 metres. This is approximately 3 times the size of worst-case scenario of the LPG depot and 10 times the size of the same for the methanol storage at Port Taranaki.¹² The nearest residence to the LNG terminal at Port Kembla is 2 kilometres. There are thousands of people within 2 kilometres of Port Taranaki.

Enabling legislation and WorkSafe's role

14. A representative of MBIE (dated 13 May 2026) stated: *Health and safety was not explicitly considered in the analysis of any of the options considered. However, it is a requirement that all operations must be consistent with New Zealand's health and safety regulatory requirements. Although LNG is a new energy source for New Zealand, LNG importation is a proven, safe technology international. The safety case will be specific to the design of the proposal and will need to be approved by New Zealand regulators. Officials continue to work closely with the shortlisted providers and with the relevant regulators on health and safety risks and mitigations.*

¹¹ It is very possible that an LNG import facility in New Zealand will be ship-based - a floating storage and regasification unit, or floating storage unit. The government was talking regularly with the LNG terminal at Port Kembla in New South Wales and had spoken with the Singaporean terminal.
<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/586896/don-t-put-it-alongside-us-liquified-natural-gas-safety-fears-raised-in-taranaki>

¹² https://squadronenergy.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Port-Kembla-Energy-Terminal/PDF/Statutory-Approvals/SQE_Final_Hazard_Analysis_approved.pdf at Appendix F on digital p.106.

15. WorkSafe’s health and safety standards and safety cases are too late if the proposed import terminal is in the wrong location. WorkSafe states *“Given the harm that MHFs can do if they fail to control risks, territorial authorities are considered People Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) with duties to consider MHFs presence and location in their planning decisions.”*¹³ Does the government become the PCBU in these circumstances and why is this not considered when locating the proposed LNG terminal in Port Taranaki?
16. WorkSafe New Zealand’s Principal Specialist Hazardous Substances gave evidence in Environment Court stating, *“from a land use/planning perspective, it’s important to remember that the WorkSafe legislation doesn’t determine where things can be, that’s select to the Resource Management Act...WorkSafe doesn’t actually have criteria that things can be in certain places.”*¹⁴
17. A recent case study from WorkSafe stated, *“When we talk about ‘incompatible land use’, we mean situations where different types of land use don’t mix well – like putting homes, schools, or shops right next to industrial sites that handle dangerous substances. In New Zealand, this can be a big safety issue. If something goes wrong at one of these high-hazard facilities, the consequences can be much worse simply because more people are nearby...”*¹⁵

¹³ <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/major-hazard-facilities/information-for-territorial-authorities/>

¹⁴ TEW v STDC transcript at pp.444-445.

¹⁵ High Hazards and Petroleum and Geothermal team- A Year in review 2024/25 at p.40. <https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/major-hazard-facilities/publications/> published Feb 2026

18. The Coalition Government are preparing to use enabling legislation (Enabling Liquefied Natural Gas Bill) to bypass the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA 1991) and Fast Track Approval Act 2024 (FTAA 2024) legislations.
19. It does so without the 'checks and balances' of considering alternative locations, alternative technologies and providing quantitative and qualitative risk assessments including worst case fatality consequences that would have been investigated and interrogated thoroughly through either the RMA 1991 or FTAA 2024.
20. The Enabling Liquefied Natural Gas Bill will put thousands of people potentially in harms' way without their knowledge or agreement. This sets a precedent. The Bill has been modelled on legislation for a National War Memorial. ^{16 17 18 19}

¹⁶ <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/energy-and-natural-resources/energy-generation-and-markets/gas-market/lng-in-new-zealand>

¹⁷ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1991/69/en/latest/#DLM230265>

¹⁸ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2024/56/en/latest/#LMS985251>

¹⁹ <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2012/76/en/latest/#d1m4680415>

APPENDIX A.

WS report – MHF (Major Hazardous Facilities), petroleum and geothermal 2024-2025

Sector profile

45

MHF
upper tier
22 type 1
11 type 2
14 type 3

74

MHF
lower tier
33 type 1
26 type 2
10 type 3

9

MHF
geothermal
power
stations
8 upper tier
1 lower tier

23

Onshore
petroleum
15 upper tier
2 lower tier
6 non-
production
installations

6

Offshore
petroleum
6 upper tier

7

Non-MHF
geothermal
power stations

3

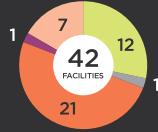
Non-MHF
geothermal
and onshore
petroleum



Northland



Waikato



Taranaki



Manawatu-Wanganui



Nelson-Tasman



West Coast



Southland



Otago



Auckland



Bay of Plenty



Hawke's Bay



Wellington



Marlborough



Canterbury

Upper tier MHF
Lower tier MHF
MHF geothermal
power station

Onshore petroleum
Offshore petroleum
Non-production

Non-MHF geothermal
power station

Non-MHF geothermal
and onshore
petroleum

APPENDIX B

New Plymouth LPG Depot Quantitative Risk
Assessment Figure 6-1 Risk Contour for the New
Plymouth LPG Depot at digital p.20.

6.2 Risk Assessment Results

The overall LSIR in the form of the risk contour for the New Plymouth depot is presented in Figure 6-1.

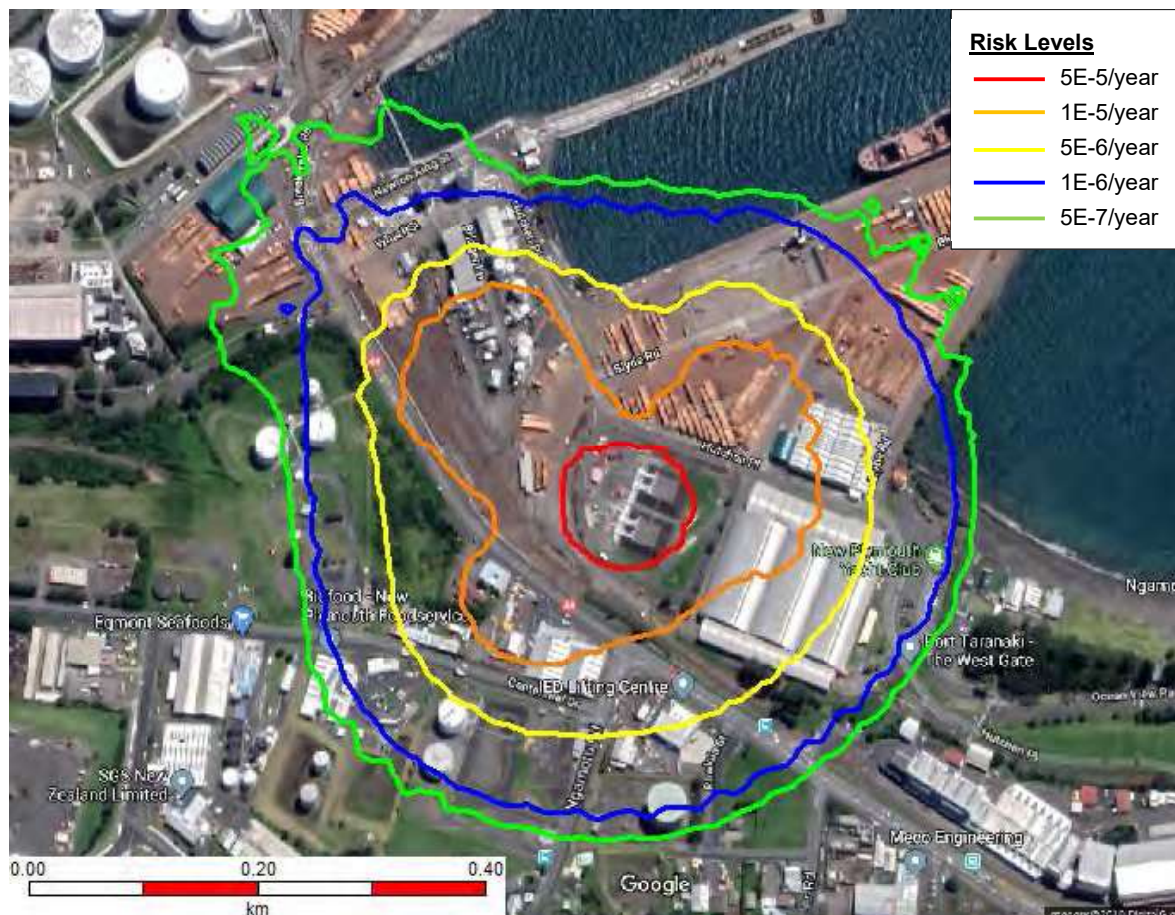


Figure 6-1: Risk Contour for the New Plymouth LPG Depot

The LSIR results as assessed against the HIPAP4 criteria are given in Table 6-2.

Table 6-2: LSIR Results as Assessed Against the HIPAP4 Land Use Criteria

LSIR	Risk Contour	HIPAP4 Land Use Criteria	Result
5E-05 / year	Red	5E-05 / year risk contour should, as a target, be contained within the boundaries of the industrial site where applicable.	No impact. The 5E-05 / year risk contour remains within the New Plymouth depot site boundary.
1E-05 / year	Orange	1E-05 / year risk contour should not extend to sporting complexes and active open space	No impact. There are no sporting complexes and active open space within the contour. However, the 1E-05 / year risk contour is partially impacting on the Breakwater Road on the south side.

APPENDIX C

New Plymouth LPG Depot Quantitative Risk
Assessment in Table 1 Release Rates and LFL
Dispersion Distances at digital p.53.

The consequence results for the LPG operating conditions and phases are presented in the tables below. Only the results for horizontal releases are presented as the horizontal releases generally generates the worse results compared to vertical releases.

Table 1 shows the release rate and flammable gas dispersion distances.

Table 1: Release Rates and LFL Dispersion Distances

Phase	Pressure (barg)	Temp. (°C)	Hole Size (mm)	Release Rate (kg/s)	LFL Dispersion Distance (m)
Liquid	10	18	2	0.06	2.8
			7	0.78	9.0
			30	14	80
			50	40	146
			80	102	239
			100	160	318
			150	360	392
Vapour (at 1 m above ground)	8.5	40	250	1000	661
			2	0.008	0.7
			7	0.095	2.4
			30	1.7	9.8
			50	4.8	20
			80	12	37
			100	19	50
Vapour (at 5 m above ground – from the top of the LPG bullets)	8.5	40	150	43	95
			2	0.008	0.8
			7	0.095	2.7
			30	1.7	11
			100	19	33

Note: The LFL distances are read at the cloud centreline height, which gives the worst case dispersion distances. As the LPG is heavier than air, the height for the worst case dispersion distances is generally at the ground level (0 m).

Table 2 shows the jet fire downwind thermal radiation distances.

Table 2: Jet Fire Downwind Thermal Radiation Distances

Phase	Hole Size (mm)	Jet Fire Downwind Effect Distance (m)					
		Jet Flame	35 kW/m ²	23 kW/m ²	12.6 kW/m ²	4.7 kW/m ²	2.1 kW/m ²
Liquid	2	4.3	5.3	5.5	6.1	7.3	8.8
	7	13	16	17	19	23	28
	30	45	59	63	70	87	106
	50	69	93	100	111	137	169
	80	104	141	152	169	210	259
	100	126	172	184	206	255	316
	150	177	246	263	294	368	456

APPENDIX D

Sherpa Ref: 21007-LET-001 NEW PLYMOUTH DRAFT
Comments of land use safety planning and risk issues,
proposed development of land at 20 Hakirau Street,
Seaport, New Plymouth dated 26 June 2020

Table 1: Potential effects from hazardous facilities.

Sherpa Ref: 21007-LET-001 NEW PLYMOUTH DRAFT

26 June 2020

Attention: Ruby Haazen
Barrister

Dear Ruby

Subject: Comments of land use safety planning and risk issues, proposed development of land at 20 Hakirau Street, Seaport, New Plymouth

As requested, I have reviewed the following documentation in relation to this matter:

- Statement of Evidence of Brett Rogers on behalf of Seaport Land Company Limited dated 19 June 2020.
- Statement of Evidence of Teresa (Terre) Ann Nicholson on behalf of Seaport Land Company Limited dated 05 June 2020.

I have also referred to the following supplementary documents which are provided in Attachment 4 and 5 respectively.

- *Elemental Well Review of Taranaki Petroleum Company-5 Rev 1, Feb 2019*
- *Worley Liquegas New Plymouth LPG Depot QRA 503652-RPT-0001 May 2019*

My comments are limited to:

- Application of qualitative and quantitative risk assessment (QRA) to land use safety planning;
- Assessment of safety risks (i.e. modelling of potential injury and fatality effects); and
- Application of workplace safety regulations (i.e. the HSW regulations in NZ), specifically the concept of SFARP and whether this is a relevant consideration for managing a leaking well in a residential development. (Note I am not a lawyer and my comments relate to typical applications of this type of regulation in previous matters I have been involved in relating to development in the vicinity of hazardous facilities).

In summary, my comments relate to:

- The need for cumulative individual fatality risk assessment accounting for all sources of risk to the development, and also societal risk assessment to account for population intensification. The proposed development is a significant intensification of

population in the vicinity of existing hazardous facilities and is potentially exposed to risk from more than one source. There are no land use safety planning risk criteria specific to NZ. Australian criteria given in HIPAP 4 (Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No 4 *Risk Criteria for Land Use Safety Planning*) have been adopted to inform land use safety planning in various District Plans in NZ. These state “*where a development proposal involves a significant intensification of population in the vicinity of such a facility, the change in societal risk needs to be taken into account, even if individual risk criteria are met*”. It is clear from the existing Liquigas QRA consequence modelling that there are potential injury / fatality effects at the proposed location of the development. It also clear, even in the absence of any specific assessment or modelling, that there are potential injury / fatality effects from the TPC-5 well. It has not been established whether there are potential injury/fatality effects from the RNP- 4 well.

- Lack of assessment of the most relevant scenario with potential health and safety effect on the proposal, i.e. flammable gas accumulation and subsequent explosion in the subfloor due to a leak from the TPC-5 well. This scenario is identified qualitatively (Brett Rogers at paragraph 21) however is not assessed in any way except to state the risk must be reduced SFARP (Brett Rogers at paragraph [10] (e); and Teresa Ann Nicholson at paragraph [114] (a)). The ALOHA modelling described for TPC-5 (Teresa (Terre) Ann Nicholson in Attachment 4) is not applicable to this scenario. It covers low pressure leaks from the outdoor processing equipment in an unconfined environment and cannot be used for accumulation scenarios in a confined environment (inside a building) such as the TPC-5 well. It also does not cover any abnormal scenarios such as loss of well control / blowout. ALOHA is primarily used for emergency planning, i.e. for far field effects and the ALOHA documentation provides warnings about low accuracy / lack of applicability within 50m of the source in some circumstances.
- Applicability of statements relating to SFARP principles for managing the risks associated with hazardous materials in workplaces are HSW regulatory requirements and the responsibility of the regulator WorkSafe. Whilst these regulations are applicable to Liquigas, Methanex and the operating wells as workplaces, it is extremely doubtful that HSW regulatory requirements would be applicable to ongoing management of a leaking well in a residential building as is not a workplace and there is no responsible employer / PCBU. In addition the HSW risk management principles require periodic reassessment of risk and application of a safety management system to ensure control measures remain effective to continue to manage the risk SFARP. These concepts are not typically applied in a residential situation.

I have provided further detail on risk in Attachment 1.

My comments do not cover amenity (noise, dust etc) or chronic health issues that may arise from exposure to toxic compounds such as benzene in hydrocarbons.

I confirm that I have read the Environment Court Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses and that this evidence is provided in accordance with the Code.

I have also proved a brief statement of my experience relevant to this matter. Refer to Attachment 3.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Polich
Principal Engineer
Sherpa Consulting Pty Ltd
jenny.polich@sherpaconsulting.com.au
+61 (0)403 855 006

Attachment 1: Comments

Context:

A resource consent application for an apartment building (more than 40 apartments) over the top of or beside an oil and gas well in New Plymouth has been made for 20 Hakirau Street, Seaport, New Plymouth. This is in the vicinity of another operating well site (Republic New Plymouth-4, RNP-4) as well as the Liquigas LPG storage facility. These facilities pose potential health and safety risks to the residential development.

Taranaki Energy Watch (TEW) is providing submissions on the proposal and have requested comments in relation to the expert witness statements relating to hazardous substances and risk.

Summary of potentially hazardous facilities

Table 1 below summarises the potentially hazardous facilities that may have effects (i.e. consequences) on the proposal. This has been summarised from the evidence reviewed and forms the basis of these comments.

Table 1: Potential effects from hazardous facilities

Hazardous Facility (Operator)	Separation distance to development	Status	Comments re consequence	Potential effect at development
LPG storage and handling (Liquigas)	~ 250 m	Operating	Potential fire / explosion QRA consequence modelling shows effect distances extending to development -see extract below.	Yes
Methanol storage and handling (Methanex)	~ 750 m	Operating	Potential fire / explosion Flammable liquids, storage only – relatively limited effect (~150-200m would be the limit of large bund fire), 'Buncefield scenario' (i.e. overfill and large flammable cloud) not relevant for alcohols .	No
Dangerous Goods wharf	~600 m	Operating	Potential fire / explosion LPG and methanol import at wharf. Shipping probably too far away to have any effect at development LPG pipeline runs to plant	Pipeline possibly
RNP-4 (Greymouth)	~70 m	Producing	Potential fire / explosion Need to do a specific consequence assessment for well blowout based on well characteristics. If it is a low flowrate well with minimal gas may be sufficient separation	Not known

Hazardous Facility (Operator)	Separation distance to development	Status	Comments re consequence	Potential effect at development
TPC-5 and associated collection equipment (unknown operator / license holder?)	0	Leaking Note: it is clear from the Elemental report that this well cannot be considered 'abandoned' in accordance with current standards that require multiple validated barriers.	Potential fire / explosion Even very small leaks that accumulate could be a hazard. Consequence modelling for confined gas leak not available Pressure is said to be 2psi for equipment (Nicholson para 75). This cannot be the well pressure but the normal pressure in the piping collecting the leaked material. The modelling does not consider abnormal events such as loss of well control / failure of pressure containing equipment. Elemental report (item 13 page 32) suggests a surface pressure of 1500 psi, and that there are formations present capable of sustaining 'strong gas' flows (page 8). The report also suggests that the pressure containing equipment is in poor condition and may not contain the pressure (page 14 'The casing strings in place are likely no longer fit to contain worst case shut in pressures associated with a well control event').	Yes

Consequence assessment

- 1) LPG effects, fully available. Refer to 503652-RPT-R0001-R0.docx, May 2019 Liquigas QRA consequence results extract page 53 of 60, Appendix 2 shows potential effects at the location of the proposal.

Table 1: Release Rates and LFL Dispersion Distances

Phase	Pressure (barg)	Temp. (°C)	Hole Size (mm)	Release Rate (kg/s)	LFL Dispersion Distance (m)
Liquid	10	18	2	0.06	2.8
			7	0.78	9.0
			30	14	80
			50	40	146
			80	102	239
			100	160	318
			150	360	392
Vapour (at 1 m above ground)	8.5	40	250	1000	661
			2	0.008	0.7
			7	0.095	2.4
			30	1.7	9.8
			50	4.8	20
			80	12	37
			100	19	50
Vapour (at 5 m above ground – from the top of the LPG bullets)	8.5	40	150	43	95
			2	0.008	0.8
			7	0.095	2.7
			30	1.7	11
			100	19	33

- 2) RNP-4 (Greymouth). None provided. Needs to be assessed.
- 3) TPC-5 and associated collection equipment. Some modelling provided, see Teresa (Terre) Ann Nicholson in Attachment 4). This may cover the collection equipment but is not appropriate for confined explosion due to gas leak in subfloor area. It also does not cover any abnormal situation such as loss of well control / well blowout. The modelling covers low pressure leaks from the outdoor processing equipment in an unconfined environment. ALOHA is primarily used for emergency planning, i.e. for far field effects and the ALOHA documentation provides warnings about low accuracy / lack of applicability within 50m of the source in some circumstances. There are examples of leaks and explosions in basement areas occurring e.g.
 - leaks in Blenheim NZ (Brett Rogers para 17)
 - USA and Canada <https://theconversation.com/a-tenth-of-active-and-abandoned-oil-and-gas-wells-in-northeastern-b-c-are-leaking-127921> ,
<http://insideenergy.org/2016/02/09/living-on-top-of-forgotten-oil-and-gas-wells/>

Risk assessment for land use safety planning

Guidelines:

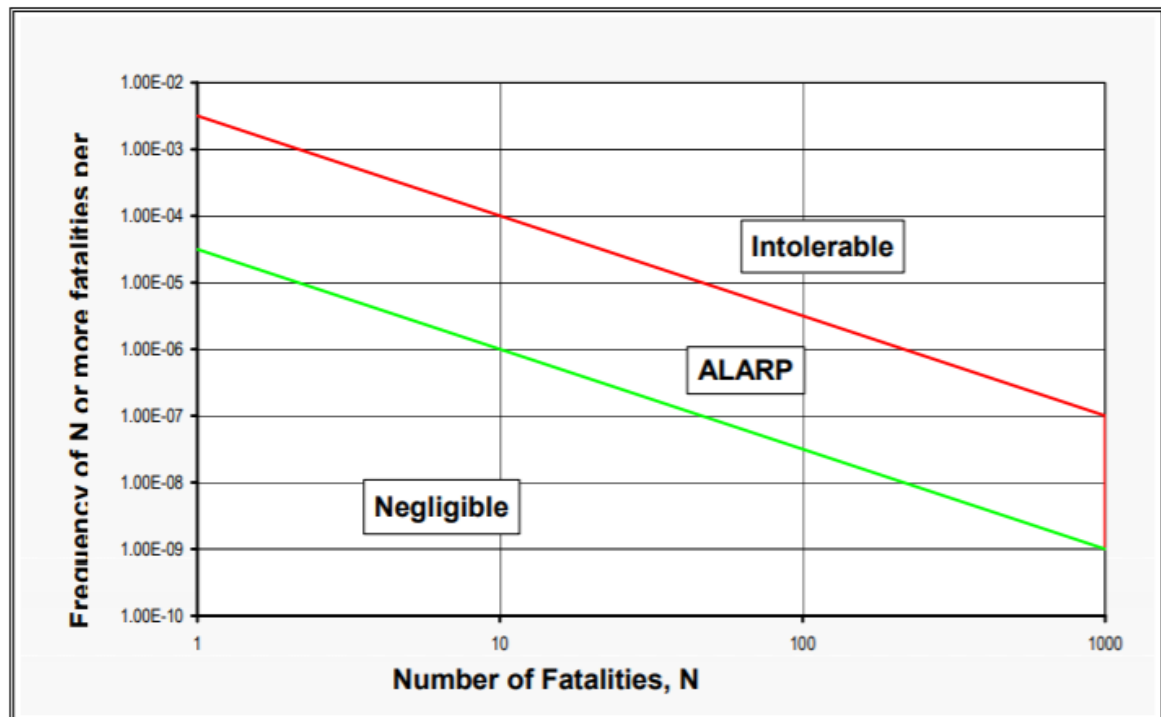
There are no specific land use safety planning risk criteria in NZ. Previous planning decisions (Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP); Christchurch City District Plan (CCDP); and the interim findings of the TEW v STDC Environment Court appeal for the proposed South Taranaki District Plan (STDP)) have considered the guidance in Australian guidelines i.e. Hazardous Industry Planning Advisory Paper No 4 *Risk Criteria for Land Use Safety Planning* known as HIPAP 4.

The key points are summarised below, key items highlighted in **bold**:

- Two aspects of risk need to be considered:
 - a) *individual risk, which considers the acceptability of a particular level of risk to an exposed individual; and*
 - b) *societal risk, which takes into account society's aversion to accidents which can result in multiple fatalities.*
- *'While it is useful to have objective, quantitative risk criteria, qualitative principles are equally important: i.e.*
 - (a) **All 'avoidable' risks should be avoided.** This necessitates the investigation of alternative locations and alternative technologies, wherever applicable, to ensure that risks are not introduced in an area where feasible alternatives are possible and justified.*
- *Individual fatality risk criterion for residential is 1×10^{-6} per year. (This is consistent with Terre Nicholson evidence).*
- *Where a development proposal involves a significant intensification of population in the vicinity of such a facility, **the change in societal risk needs to be taken into account, even if individual risk criteria are met.***
- *Examples of such situations would include medium to high density residential development (although this would not normally be considered to be appropriate in such a location), sporting facilities where large numbers of spectators are likely to be present and shopping complexes. In such instances, the incremental societal risk should be compared against the indicative criteria of Figure 3. Provided the incremental societal risk lies within the negligible region, development should not be precluded. If incremental risks lie within the ALARP region, options should be considered to relocate people away from the affected areas. If, after taking this step, there is still a significant portion of the societal risk plot within the ALARP region, the proposed development should only be approved if benefits clearly outweigh the risks. NOTE the ALARP criteria extend to a frequency of 1×10^{-9} per year as shown in extract below.*

and do not represent a firm requirement in NZVT.

Figure 3: Indicative Societal Risk Criteria



Examples in evidence

- 1) Liquigas site has a full recent QRA. This does not include societal risk.
- 2) A 2008 QRA from Liquigas Woolston is also referred to in evidence (Nicholson Attachment 2) to make the point that expansion does not necessarily result in change in contours. That may be true in some circumstances but is simply not relevant as an expansion would need to be specifically assessed. As per the Christchurch District Plan, the most recent version of the Liquigas Woolston QRA (<https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Consultation/2019/03-March/District-Plan/PC1-S32-Report.pdf>) shows future case risk contours substantially larger than the 2008 version presented in evidence, i.e. if a similar expansion applied to New Plymouth contours could extend by 80-100m. A contour comparison is shown in Attachment 2. The more recent QRA is also attached.
- 3) Reference is made to a USA QRA for Hermosa Beach. In my view this is not relevant. Risk assessment needs to be specific to the site. The Hermosa Beach QRA is for an open air site presumably with modern well design. It does not include any gas accumulation scenarios in the subfloor and does not account for potential higher frequency of loss of well containment events due to old style well construction (i.e. no cement casing, 'gas zones behind casing that are still at virgin pressure. The casing strings in place are likely no longer fit to contain worst case shut in pressures associated with a well control event' as per Elemental report page 14). The QRA is simply not applicable to TPC-5. Even if it were applicable, Table 1 in evidence (Nicholson para 107) shows the risk within 18m is 1×10^{-4} per year and that the risk within 35m is 1×10^{-5} .

per year i.e. significantly higher than the 1×10^{-6} per year residential risk criterion at the development site which has no separation distance (i.e. 0 m).

These examples demonstrate that the proposed development site is exposed to risk from multiple sources and therefore cumulative risk should be assessed.

I also note that the 250m separation distance for wells in the STDP is erroneously described as a risk contour (Rogers para 10f). It is not a risk contour. It is a conservatively set limiting separation distance based on consequences available for the larger flow / energy rate wells in Taranaki. As noted (Rogers para 37) there is certainly potential to model the worst case consequence or a risk profile (i.e. accounting for likelihood) for specific wells and scale this back. I also note that the 1GJ/day identified for TPC-5 appears to be consistent with the typical leakage rates, not an abnormal release scenario, for example due to cap failure or loss of well containment which is the assessment basis in a QRA.

In addition the proposal means the population is changing from a day shift low density industrial population in an industrial zone to a 24 hour medium density residential population and societal risk should therefore be assessed.

Applicability of SFARP concept in HSW regulations

There are repeated references in the evidence to the concept of reducing the risk associated with TPC-5 SFARP (Rogers para 10d), e), Nicholson para 114a)).

Assuming the well is in a workplace (which it presumably is now and would be for the duration of any abandonment and mitigation work activities), hence HSW applies, NZ Worksafe¹ provides the following guidance on managing risk:

PCBUs must first try to eliminate a risk if this is reasonably practicable. This can be done by removing the source of the harm (e.g. removing a trip hazard or faulty equipment).

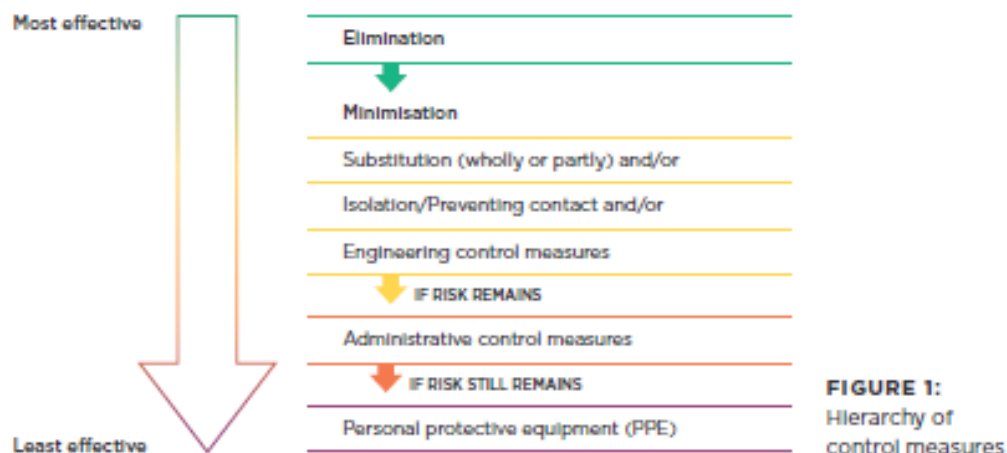
If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate, the risk must be minimized so far as is reasonably practicable.

In the risk reduction hierarchy (see image below), PCBUs must minimise risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable, by first taking one or more of the following actions that are the most appropriate and effective taking into account the nature of the risk:

- *substituting with a lower risk activity or substance*
- *isolating people from the hazard/preventing people being exposed to the risk*
- *applying engineering control measures.*

If a risk then remains, the PCBU must minimise the remaining risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, by putting in place administrative control measures.

¹ Ref: NZ Worksafe PART 2 OF GUIDANCE ON THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK (GENERAL RISK AND WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT) REGULATIONS 2016 February 2019



In addition Worksafe provides the following guidance on how to decide what is ‘reasonably practicable’

When used in this context, something is reasonably practicable if it is reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, having weighed up and considered all relevant matters, including:

How likely are any hazards or risks to occur?

How severe could the harm that might result from the hazard or risk be?

What a person knows or ought to reasonably know about the risk and the ways of eliminating or minimising it (e.g. by removing the source of the risk or using control measures such as isolation or physical controls to minimise it).

What measures exist to eliminate or minimise the risk (control measures)?

How available and suitable is the control measure(s)?

Lastly weigh up the cost:

What is the cost of eliminating or minimising the risk?

Is the cost grossly disproportionate to the risk?

The approach adopted for TPC-5 so far does not fully align with the risk reduction hierarchy or the SFARP requirements in the following ways:

- The likelihood (hence risk) of an abnormal event involving TPC-5 has not been assessed.
- The Elemental report expressed a very clear preference for abandonment (Paragraph 5 of Exec summary page 5) – this is ‘isolation’ in the risk reduction hierarchy. The report also identifies significant difficulties with access for abandonment to current standards, and also the possibility of failure to achieve abandonment due to the current poor condition of the well equipment. It is relevant to consider that the access will only get worse if any future works were required with an apartment building on top of the well.

- There is no consideration of 'separation' as an option. i.e. not building the apartments over the well and leaving a separation distance to avoid any accumulation scenarios if leakage occurs – which is a 'known' minimisation method. In some jurisdictions structures are prohibited over abandoned wells and setbacks are specified e.g. Canada, Alberta Energy Regulator, Directive 079, 2014 page 4

Surface structures on top of an abandoned well are not permitted and a minimum 5 m setback radius around the well must be maintained.

- The engineering measures suggested (Rogers para 10e) reproduced below, involve relatively complex engineering solutions such as pumps, flares, tanker loadout, gas detection which can be operated and maintained by competent personnel in an industrial setting to ensure that they remain effective and reliable. HSW regulations require a safety management system (SMS) is in place in a workplace to make sure risk continue to be managed effectively. It is unclear how this type of control measure would be adequately managed in a residential setting as it would be well outside the experience of a typical building property manager. An SMS is not likely to be required in a residential building. For example if the ventilation system fails, is it still 'safe', does the building need evacuation?

(e) If abandonment of TPC-5 is not practicable, then a second option to minimise the risk to as low as reasonably practical would be to upgrade the processing system. This would involve placing an upgraded production system, venting or flaring the gas, maintaining regular offtakes of the oil from the separation tank, putting enhanced process controls on the system and ventilating the area under the floor.

- Also note that emergency planning is not a very effective control measure for residential populations. Unlike an industrial workforce, the people present change so cannot be trained in an appropriate response. Vulnerable / not very mobile people such as children the elderly may also be present. In my experience with residential or commercial development adjacent to hazardous facilities, for example the Botany Industrial Park in Sydney, emergency planning may be required but has to be very simple. Any mitigation measures must be passive i.e. inherently part of design, i.e. building wall design, air conditioning intake son unexposed side of buildings, exits located on remote site of building, and response no more complicated than moving to an exit when an alarm sounds.

In addition in my experience with more sensitive third party developments in the vicinity of hazardous facilities the costs and benefits do not apply to the same party. And in this case there is no cost benefit analysis to determine whether there is gross disproportion of costs to benefits. This needs to be considered when assessing what is 'reasonably practicable'. So in this case:

- The financial benefits of the development over the well accrue to the developers who will move on, leaving residual safety risks and any ongoing maintenance / operation / well repairs / costs of the mitigation measures with the residents. There is an obvious incentive for a developer to choose the lowest capital cost option and not consider any lifetime costs.
- The future consequence of a subfloor gas accumulation explosion event is severe, i.e. multiple fatalities. The likelihood is very uncertain (and not assessed in any of the evidence provided) and the residual risk associated with the different options for TPC-5 (i.e. full abandonment to current standard, engineering mitigation measures, leave as is etc) has not been evaluated. An assessment of what other options such as separation distance (i.e., not building directly over the well) may be 'reasonably practicable' has not been made.

Overall in my view, the risk associated with locating residential building above TPC-5 is not clearly defined, the difference in residual risk based on the different mitigation measures is not assessed. It is not clear who would be responsible for maintaining the effectiveness of any well mitigation measures.

It therefore seems that a better understanding of this risk is required and it is premature to expect that this risk will be eliminated or avoided, or else managed SFARP through setting a condition of consent.

Attachment 2: Additional Information

Comparison of Liquigas contours for Woolston expansion. The extent of 1×10^{-6} per year contour in the 2018 QRA is at least 100m greater than the 2008 version.

May 2018

<https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Consultation/2019/03-March/District-Plan/PC1-S32-Report.pdf>

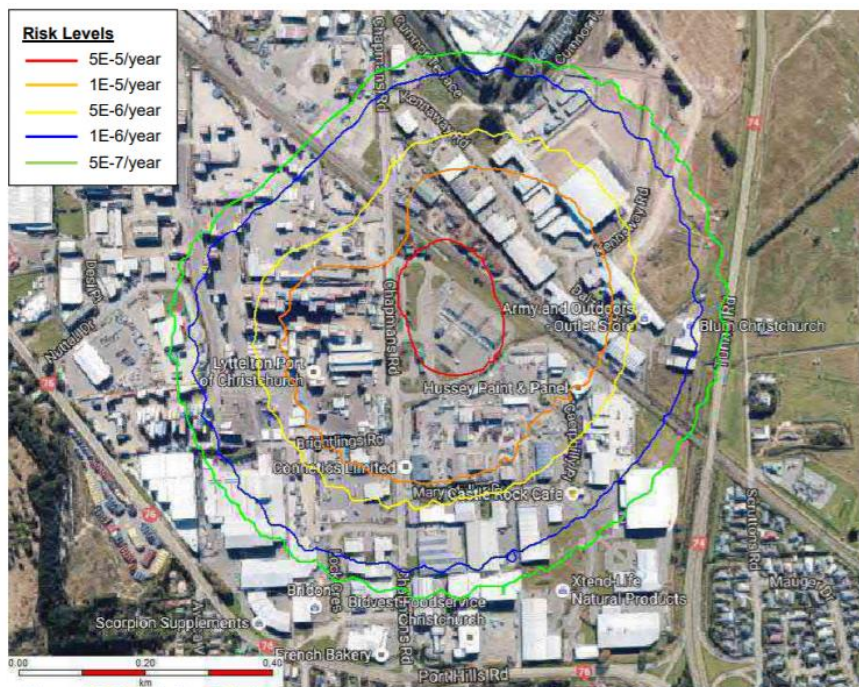


Figure 6-5: Cumulative Risk Contour for the Currently Operating Woolston LPG Depot and the Consented LPG Storage Upgrade

May 2008

Nicholson evidence Attachment 2

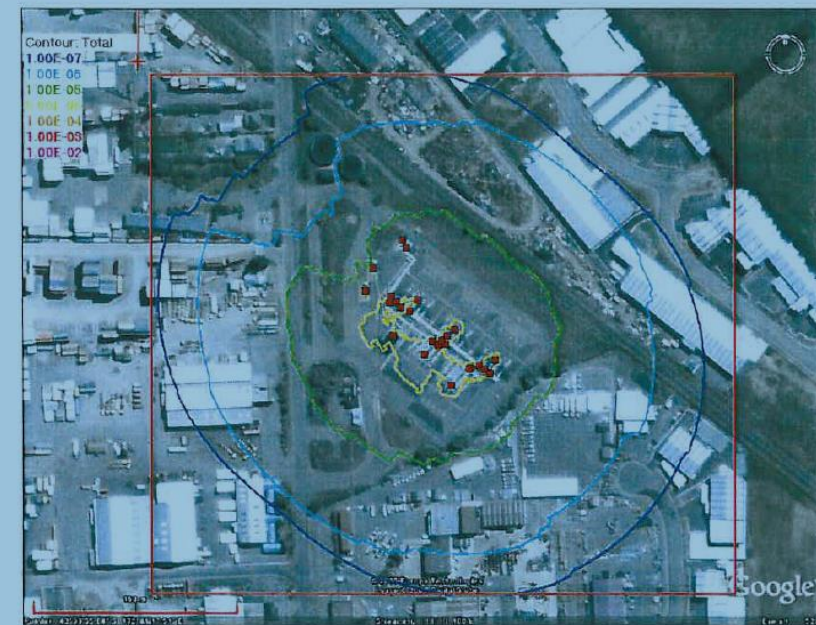


Figure 1.2 - Risk contours following storage upgrade

Attachment 3: Experience Summary

My name is Jennifer Polich. I am a Principal Engineer at Sherpa Consulting Pty Ltd (Sherpa) based in Sydney, Australia.

My qualifications are a Bachelor of Engineering (Chemical) and a Masters of Environmental Engineering and Management (MEnvEng). I have over 20 years experience in process safety and risk management in the chemical, oil and gas and related industries. I have been employed by Sherpa for over 10 years. I have previously been employed by BOC Gases, Kellogg Brown and Root and Orica Australia Pty Ltd. I am an MIChemE and a certified functional safety engineer, FS Eng (TÜV Rheinland).

My prior experience relevant to this work includes a large number of QRA and land use planning studies relating to development of facilities handling large quantities of hazardous substances in the vicinity of other land uses. Projects in Australia and NZ include:

- WOSL Bulk Hydrocarbon Terminal (Auckland) QRA with proposed adjacent prison development that was undertaken jointly for a Steering Committee comprising WOSL, NZ Department of Corrections and Liquigas.
- QRA for Lyttelton Port in relation to proposed cruise ship terminal.
- QRA for the Wynyard Quarter tank terminals in relation to the change of land use for the Sea+City project (Auckland, New Zealand) and change of use to America's Cup venue 2021.
- QRA and land use planning studies for a number of complex industrial facilities including the Botany Industrial Park complex (Botany, NSW, Australia).
- QRA and land use planning studies an integrated ammonium nitrate manufacturing complex which includes bulk ammonia storage, nitric acid and AN plants, chloralkali and derivatives plants, cyanide manufacture (Qld, Australia).
- QRA and land use planning studies fuel terminal expansions at Port Botany, (NSW, Australia).
- Numerous Major Hazard Facility (MHF) safety cases including risk assessment and SFARP demonstration for operators in the energy, chemical and storage sectors.

I have also provided expert witness advice on similar risk and land use safety planning matters on behalf of various oil and gas companies in relation to the Auckland Unitary Plan process and Christchurch Recovery District Plan, and on behalf of Taranaki Energy Watch for the South Taranaki District Plan.

Attachment 4: Liquigas QRAs

- 1) Liquigas QRAs New Plymouth
- 2) Liquigas QRA Woolston

Attachment 5: Elemental Well Abandonment report (redacted)

ANNEX 4

Submission in support of the petition of Climate Justice
Taranaki to stop plans for an LNG import facility

Lawyers for Climate Action

13 October 2026



**LAWYERS FOR
CLIMATE ACTION**

**Submission in support of the petition of
Climate Justice Taranaki to stop
plans for an LNG import facility**

13 October 2026

Acting Executive Director: Laura MacKay

Board Members: Jenny Cooper KC (President) /
Bjørn-Oliver Magsig/ Bryce Lyall/ Debra Dorrington/
Frankie McKeefry / James Every-Palmer KC /Martin Smith/
Nicola Hedge/ Sally Gepp KC / Alexandra Finlay/

Email contact: laura@lawyersforclimateaction.nz



13 Oct 2026

To: Petitions Committee

Re: Submission in support of the petition of Climate Justice Taranaki: Stop plans for an LNG import facility at Port Taranaki

About Lawyers for Climate Action NZ Inc

- 1 Lawyers for Climate Action NZ Incorporated uses the law to drive meaningful action on climate change. We are an incorporated society and registered charity with around 400 members across Aotearoa New Zealand. Our members include Kings' counsel, barristers, solicitors, and legal academics. We have no vested interest other than seeing Aotearoa New Zealand contribute to the goals of the Paris Agreement in light of the science of climate change, as expressed by the IPCC. You can find out more about Lawyers for Climate Action NZ [here](#).

Submission

- 2 We support the petition of Climate Justice Taranaki published on 31 August 2026, which urges the Government to withdraw its plans to enable a liquefied natural gas (LNG) import facility. We set out our reasons for this below.

There is no demonstrated need for a LNG import facility

- 1 The intention to import LNG was announced in August 2024, following a period of high electricity prices that winter. However, both scenario modelling and forward market electricity prices now show the electricity system being far more in balance in 2028 than in 2024, even with reduced gas availability and flexibility.¹ One of the key reasons for high prices in 2024 was that generation build had not kept up with need.² That has now largely been corrected, with strong investment in renewable generation easing the need for thermal generation. As noted by Concept Consulting in its recent report *Review of proposed dry-year reliability obligation*, "by the start of 2026 the mean need for thermal generation to cover hydrological variation had fallen by around 40% relative to the start of 2024, and by 2028 is likely to be 70% less than 2024.

¹ See modelling undertaken by Energy Link for the New Zealand Climate Foundation in the New Zealand Climate Foundation "Submission on a proposed reliability obligation to manage dry-year risk" at page 3 (**Annex 7**); Concept Consulting "Outlook for the New Zealand Gas Market" (available to your office on request from Concept Consulting); Concept Consulting "[Review of proposed dry-year reliability obligation](#)" (20 July 2026). See also the reduction in forward electricity prices as available on the [Electricity Authority's website](#).

² Concept Consulting "[Winter 2024 in review](#)" (August 2026) at page 9



Forward prices for the 2027 to 2029 calendar years have fallen by 34% to 25%, respectively, since the start of this year.”³

- 2 This has changed the scenario since 2024. Concept Consulting’s *Outlook for the New Zealand Gas Market* (available on request from Concept Consulting) finds that, even in a stretched scenario (with low gas production, high demand and no new gas storage) there is no shortfall that would require LNG before 2030. This follows on from modelling commissioned from Concept Consulting by MBIE (released under the Official Information Act and partially unredacted following a complaint to the Ombudsman) that states the “modelled need for LNG is low, even in scenarios with less other security resources.”⁴
- 3 Some gentailers have also indicated that an LNG import facility is not needed. For example, Meridian Energy told Parliament’s Transport and Infrastructure Committee in May that LNG is not necessary from an electricity perspective because dry year risk is managed through the next 10 years due to a series of agreements the sector had put in place, including the Huntly strategic coal reserve, demand response measures with Tiwai Point aluminium smelter and remaining generation sources.⁵

Value for money has not been demonstrated

- 4 There is a clear risk that the LNG import facility will not deliver value for money and will fail to achieve its intended outcome. This issue has been raised to the Government by multiple different organisations, including by the Infrastructure Commission,⁶ Rewiring Aotearoa/Sapere,⁷ Concept Consulting’s in its report *Outlook for the New Zealand Gas Market* (available to your office on request from Concept Consulting), the Smart Energy Alliance,⁸ the New Zealand Green Building Council⁹, the Climate Change Commission,¹⁰ and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.¹¹ Modelling conducted by Concept Consulting for MBIE to inform LNG

³ Concept Consulting “[Review of proposed dry-year reliability obligation](#)” (20 July 2026) at page 5.

⁴ RNZ “[Officials redacted advice showing “low need” for LNG imports](#)” (11 June 2026); RNZ “[LNG document should not have been hidden](#)” (14 August 2026)

⁵ See RNZ “[LNG imports not needed for dry year cover, Meridian says](#)” (29 May 2026).

⁶ RNZ “[Infrastructure Commission warned govt to slow down on LNG plans](#)” (22 June 2026)

⁷ Sapere “[From faultlines to resilience: the 2024 energy shock does not require an LNG response](#)” (June 2 2026)

⁸ [Open letter from the Smart Energy Alliance to Rt Hon Christopher Luxon & Hon Simeon Brown](#) (21 July 2026);

⁹ New Zealand Green Building Council “[Distributed energy is cheaper than LNG – and reduces costs for Kiwi families](#)” (16 February 2026).

¹⁰ He Pou a Rangi Climate Change Commission “[Monitoring report: emissions reduction](#)” (July 2026) at pages 8, 10, 31, 33.

¹¹ [Letter from Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment to Hon Simon Watts](#) (5 March 2026); [Response from Hon Simon Watts](#).



analysis also concluded that there was low or no need for LNG.¹² The key reasons for this are set out below.

Alternative, potentially lower cost options have not been fully considered

- 5 In determining a solution to the dry year issue, a number of alternatives were identified and immediately dismissed, or only subject to perfunctory consideration. MBIE initially considered five alternatives to LNG, however the LNG proposal was developed in significantly more detail than the other options initially considered, meaning it is difficult to meaningfully compare them.¹³ Other viable alternatives were dismissed at the outset with no consideration.¹⁴
- 6 There are a number of potential viable alternatives, including (for example): more investment in renewable firming options, greater use of demand management, supporting large gas users to transition, supply side support, and stronger energy efficiency measures. A good example is the analysis undertaken by Sapere (and commissioned by Rewiring Aotearoa).¹⁵ It found that importing LNG to solve the dry year problem was not adequately compared to a feasible and competitive alternative of diesel (in the short term) and renewables (in the long term). Using diesel as a bridge to around 2039 could be lower cost than the Government's LNG proposal. As demonstrated in that report, diesel provides a much better short to medium term dry year insurance option as the capital cost is significantly lower than LNG. In addition, when combined with electricity demand flexibility, contingent hydro storage and Huntly, there may be a substantially reduced need or even no need for a dedicated dry-year fuel. At the very least, a lower capital cost interim dry year solution could provide greater optionality, which would allow time to develop the most cost effective long term dry year solution.

It is unclear that the LNG import facility would actually reduce electricity prices

- 7 The Government claims that part of the need for an LNG import facility is because the electricity market is pricing in the risk of shortages or the risk of needing to do very expensive deals in a dry year. It argues this was reflected in the difference between ASX futures contract prices and modelled forward average electricity prices which at the time showed a \$30-\$50/MWh difference, labelled by the Government as a "dry

¹² RNZ "[Officials redacted advice showing "low need" for LNG imports](#)" (11 June 2026); RNZ "[LNG document should not have been hidden](#)" (14 August 2026)

¹³ See limited analysis of alternatives in MBIE "[Exploring the case for LNG](#)" (19 December 2025) at pages 20 - 25.

¹⁴ See MBIE "[Exploring the case for LNG](#)", Annex One (19 December 2025) at page 53.

¹⁵ Sapere "[From faultlines to resilience: the 2024 energy shock does not require an LNG response](#)" (June 2 2026)



year risk premium”.¹⁶ The Government argues that LNG availability could lower these forward prices by at least \$10/MWh.¹⁷

- 8 However, MBIE has not produced any evidence that the difference between ASX contract prices and modelled forward wholesale prices was caused in whole or in part by a lack of thermal fuels and not other factors – for example market power, or more generalised uncertainty about the overall balance of supply and demand at the time. Without having satisfactorily evidenced the problem definition (and also noting the point above that this difference has significantly decreased) it is not possible to be certain that the LNG import facility will lower prices for consumers in the manner assumed by the Government. More recent information points to the opposite conclusion: the fall in ASX futures contract prices has been larger for 2027 (when LNG will not be available) than for 2028 onwards, strongly suggesting that this fall is not related to the Government’s LNG announcement.¹⁸ The Electricity Authority instead attributes the gradual decline in futures prices to the influx of new renewable electricity generation.¹⁹
- 9 The most recent report by Concept Consulting *Winter 2024 in review*,²⁰ states that modelled average prices for 2028 and ASX futures prices for 2027-29 are now in line with the long-run cost of new generation at \$120-\$130/MWh, significantly reduced from a price of ~\$200/MWh in 2024. This report models the introduction of LNG at \$25/GJ in 2028 to potentially reduce average wholesale prices by only a further \$4/MWh: however adding cost-recovery for the terminal of \$3-5/MWh to electricity prices would entirely negate this already very marginal reduction, which raises clear questions regarding whether the LNG import facility is value for money.
- 10 Even if a price premium could be proven to have been caused by dry year risk, it is not the case that reducing dry year risk would simply flow through to lower prices for consumers. Such an outcome would be dependent on the cost and the cost recovery mechanism of the dry year solution, and that any reduction would be passed onto consumers. For example, other Concept Consulting modelling found that forcing an LNG import facility that would be paid for by electricity consumers is modelled to raise electricity prices by 3% out to 2035.²¹ It further found that a subsidised LNG import facility would have a net present value cost to New Zealand of \$6.2 billion.
- 11 In addition, the modelling of electricity prices conducted for MBIE does not take into account price volatility of LNG.²² A similar point was made by the Climate Change

¹⁶ Cabinet Paper “[Government Investment in dry year risk](#)” at [13]

¹⁷ Cabinet Paper “[Government Investment in dry year risk](#)” at [23]

¹⁸ Concept Consulting “[Review of proposed dry-year reliability obligation](#)” (20 July 2026) at page 11.

¹⁹ Electricity Authority “[Eye on electricity: ASX futures price volatility](#)” (17 April 2026)

²⁰ Concept Consulting “[Winter 2024 in review](#)” (August 2026) at page 5, 9, 22.

²¹ Concept Consulting “Outlook for the New Zealand Gas Market” (available to your office on request from Concept Consulting).

²² RNZ “[Government’s plans for LNG terminal didn’t model international price spike](#)” (22 April 2026).



Commission and Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment – that there is potential for LNG to increase the country’s exposure to global instability which could result in higher costs compared to alternative options.²³

- 12 We understand MBIE’s perspective to be that, by 2028 (when New Zealand would be importing LNG) LNG futures prices are currently back to near normal levels.²⁴ However, such an approach assumes that the war in Iran (which is causing the current spike) has ended, and that there will not be a future crisis which causes a spike. Given there have been two major crises in the last five years which have impacted international gas prices (the wars in Ukraine and Iran), this is not at all guaranteed. The modelled benefits and costs of LNG rely on the import price assumed, so failing to consider potential price spikes is a major analytical gap.

Potential chilling effect on energy transition and cost impact of international obligations has not been fully considered

- 13 Subsidising LNG (via the electricity sector paying costs of the terminal instead of the full price being recovered through gas sales) has the potential to cause energy market price distortions which will have a chilling effect on investment in low-carbon alternatives. At a minimum, a clear “crowding out” assessment of the impacts of investment should be undertaken prior to committing to the LNG import facility.
- 14 This analysis is supported in the Climate Change Commission’s most recent monitoring report which warns that LNG runs the risk of signalling delay to the transition from fossil fuels which is likely to affect the pace of emissions reductions and delay investment in the electrification needed to unlock economy-wide emissions reductions.²⁵
- 15 Further, the only publicly available assessment of the impact on greenhouse gas emissions of the LNG import facility which has been released is contained in the climate implications of policy assessment disclosure sheet (**CIPA**).²⁶ However, the CIPA only assesses emissions from electricity generation, and excludes emissions from direct gas use, which are likely to be the dominant cause of emissions related to the LNG import facility. The Treasury has recently estimated that New Zealand would need to spend an estimated \$4.4 – \$5 billion on offshore mitigation actions to meet its first Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.²⁷ Domestic

²³ [Letter from Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment to Hon Simon Watts](#) (5 March 2026) at page 2; He Pou a Rangi Climate Change Commission “[Monitoring report: emissions reduction](#)” (July 2026) at pages 8, 31.

²⁴ MBIE Briefing “[Update on the case for LNG](#)” (1 April 2026) at page 3.

²⁵ He Pou a Rangi Climate Change Commission “[Monitoring report: emissions reduction](#)” (July 2026) at pages 8, 90.

²⁶ Climate implications of policy assessment: Disclosure sheet ([at page 84 of a proactive release](#)).

²⁷ Treasury “[New Zealand’s Nationally Determined Contributions – Potential Fiscal Costs Associated with Offshore Mitigation](#)” Paper 26/01 (June 2026)



actions which *increase* emissions could also increase this liability, a point which does not appear to have been taken into account during the procurement planning process.²⁸

Health and safety concerns and lack of consultation with local community

- 16 The Government has publicly released very little information about the health and safety risks of the LNG import facility, and primarily has relied on a single fact sheet.²⁹ While an initial safety evaluation has been undertaken by the two shortlisted providers, MBIE has stated this will not be released due to commercial sensitivity.³⁰ Lawyers for Climate Action has filed a complaint with the Ombudsman in relation to this withholding.³¹ There has been no consultation with the community on the proposals or alternatives, and it appears the local community will be consulted only on the final option and only *after* an operator is selected and the contract is presumably signed.³²
- 17 The local community has strong concerns, which groups have raised with their local MPs and the Port.³³ These concerns include:
- a. The siting of an LNG import facility within such close proximity of a residential area. The Government has stated it is “talking regularly” with the LNG terminal at Port Kembla in New South Wales.³⁴ However, community groups have noted that the regulatory analysis of the approved FSRU in Port Kembla Australia includes a worst-case safety consequence zone of 2km, and that the approved Port Kembla site is located 2km away from residential

²⁸ For completeness we note that the Climate Change Commission has recently stated that New Zealand is at risk of missing its third emissions budget under the Climate Change Response Act 2002. Actions which would increase emissions also increase the risk this budget will not be met. We also refer to the Audit Office’s explanation of ‘value for money’ which may, depending on the context of an organisation, include assessing whether environmental impacts and sustainability have been appropriately considered (The Audit Office “[Defining and assessing value for money](#)”). Section 5ZN of the Climate Change Response Act 2002 also supports this discretion.

²⁹ MBIE “[LNG safety and environment fact sheet](#)”

³⁰ RNZ “[Battle lines drawn over proposed LNG facility](#)” (24 July 2026)

³¹ Lawyers for Climate Action “[Back to the Ombudsman \(again\): MBIE’s refusal to release health and safety information on the LNG import facility](#)” (18 September 2026)

³² MBIE “[LNG safety and environment fact sheet](#)”. This approach was confirmed via an answer by Minister Brown to an oral parliamentary question, where he stated that once a preferred provider was selected, there would be the opportunity to engage with the local community (see [Hansard Oral Question No.12](#), 22 July 2026).

³³ The local community has held two community meetings and a protest, which was attended by David McLeod (National MP). Taranaki Energy Watch has met with both David McLeod and Barbara Kuriger to voice their concerns with the LNG import facility. See RNZ “[Packed New Plymouth hall hears arguments against Taranaki LNG facility](#)” (27 May 2026); The Post “[Opposition building against LNG terminal plan for Taranaki](#)” (20 May 2026); RNZ “[Don’t put it alongside us: liquefied natural gas safety fears raised in Taranaki](#)” (15 February 2026); 1news “[Some New Plymouth residents anxious over LNG terminal near homes](#)” (14 June 2026).

³⁴ RNZ “[Don’t put it alongside us: liquefied natural gas safety fears raised in Taranaki](#)” (15 February 2026)



areas. In contrast, a facility within Port Taranaki would put thousands of homes as well as schools and childcare centres within a 2km radius.³⁵

- b. The Government's intention to legislate consents via new enabling legislation rather than use normal or fast-track processes for consents, which appears likely to bypass usual consideration of whether the facility is needed and whether there are other safer alternative locations for a facility.³⁶
- c. That Government communications do not adequately inform the local community in relation to safety. For example:
 - (i) The Government has stated that existing safety processes under the Health and Safety at Work Act will be followed.³⁷ However the community is concerned that this may not be a sufficient protection given the most critical safety decision - where the facility is located - will be bypassed through enabling legislation.
 - (ii) The Government's "fact sheet" contains statements that could act to mislead and falsely reassure the community. For example it states that LNG is safe because it is non-flammable and non-explosive in its cryogenic liquid form, and claims that in the event of a release resulting gas "quickly rises and disperses on its own".³⁸ However, this fails to make the local community aware that any leak of liquid LNG generates large volumes of flammable vapour which spreads initially at ground level, as clearly stated in the Australian Safety Data Sheets for LNG, which note that LNG is an "extremely flammable gas."³⁹ Australian Safety Data Sheets for LNG outline extensive safety and firefighting precautions.⁴⁰

- 18 This approach to procurement does not align with New Zealand's international obligations. For example, the OECD Decision-Recommendation of the Council concerning Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response, which applies to installations where hazardous substances are produced, recommends that adherents (including New Zealand) should:

³⁵ See comments of Sarah Roberts from Taranaki Energy Watch in RNZ "[Battle lines drawn over proposed LNG facility](#)" (24 July 2026). See also the reference by Minister Brown to the Port Kembla facility.

³⁶ See comments of Sarah Roberts from Taranaki Energy Watch in RNZ "[Battle lines drawn over proposed LNG facility](#)" (24 July 2026).

³⁷ RNZ "[Battle lines drawn over proposed LNG facility](#)" (24 July 2026).

³⁸ MBIE "[LNG safety and environment fact sheet](#)".

³⁹ Evol LNG "[Safety Data Sheet LNG](#)"; Shell "[LNG Data Sheet](#)"

⁴⁰ Evol LNG "[Safety Data Sheet LNG](#)"; Shell "[LNG Data Sheet](#)"



- a. "ensure, through the legal and procedural means they deem appropriate, that the potentially affected public....has access to such other information needed to understand the nature of the possible effects of an accident (such as information on hazardous substances capable of causing serious off-site damage) and be able to contribute effectively to decisions concerning hazardous installations....."⁴¹
- b. "take measures to facilitate, as appropriate, opportunities for the public, in all potentially affected jurisdictions, to comment *prior to decisions being made* by public authorities *concerning siting* prior to construction...." (emphasis added).⁴²

19 In our view, no decision should be made on whether to proceed with the LNG import facility until the local community has been properly consulted and provided with sufficient information on the safety risks of the preferred and alternative options. To align with OECD criteria, the community should also be provided with an ability to input on the siting decision ahead of decisions being taken. This approach would support alignment with Rule 8 of the Government Procurement Rules which states agencies must operate within the context of relevant international agreements to which New Zealand is a signatory.

⁴¹ OECD "Decision-Recommendation of the Council concerning Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response" OECD/LEGAL/0490 (Adopted on 08/06/2023) at cl III.1(c)

⁴² OECD "Decision-Recommendation of the Council concerning Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response" OECD/LEGAL/0490 (Adopted on 08/06/2023) at cl IV.