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Media Release

Ports of Auckland to develop Waikato freight hub

Ports of Auckland Limited announced today that it has signed a conditional agreement to purchase 33 hectares of land at Northgate Business Park for development as a freight hub. The site has excellent road and rail connections and is located at Horotiu, 8km north of Hamilton in an area with growing manufacturing, warehousing and logistics businesses.

“This is a strategic purchase, which will be developed over a number of years,” said Ports of Auckland Chief Executive Tony Gibson. “Establishing a freight hub in the Waikato is a central part of our supply chain strategy as it is one of New Zealand’s fastest growing areas and a major freight generator. Waikato will complete our North Island freight hub network, complementing our existing sites in the Manawatu, Bay of Plenty and Wiri, South Auckland.

“The key benefit of our freight hub network is that it can be used to balance freight flows around the North Island and eliminate unnecessary movement of empty containers. By driving out waste from the supply chain we can lower the cost to importers and exporters.

“Establishing a Waikato freight hub will improve access to overseas markets for Waikato-based exporters and will reduce exporters’ costs because of the supply chain efficiencies we will be able to achieve,” said Ports of Auckland Chief Executive Tony Gibson.

“Better international freight links will also benefit the region, encouraging additional investment in the Waikato and greater employment opportunities.

“There will be significant investment in the site over a number of years, with the first step being to establish road and a rail connections. Rail forms a key part of our supply-chain strategy. The Northgate site was chosen because it is beside the North Island Main Trunk line, with a direct link to our other freight hubs and our Waitematā seaport. The site is also located close to State Highway 1.

“We are committed to increasing our use of rail and creating a more sustainable transport system, which will in turn help generate infrastructure savings at a national level. Our target is to increase the use of rail from 13 percent to 30 percent of traffic to our Waitematā port in Auckland. The development of our inland freight hub network is critical to achieving this target,” he added.

The development will adopt strong environmental principles, such as storm water treatment, rain water recycling and low energy use.

Ports of Auckland is now working through the conditions attached to the sale and is aiming to complete the deal by March 31.