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## **AUCKLAND CAR QUESTION: PLAYERS URGED TO LOOK NORTH**

*Land-owner urges full exploration of options to future-proof vehicle import industry*

**MARSDEN POINT, Northland** – Marsden Maritime Holdings Ltd (NZX:MMH) has urged the North Island vehicle industry, Ports of Auckland and Auckland Council to consider using some of the hundreds of hectares of land at Marsden Point in Northland to future-proof the upper North Island vehicle import industry.

It wants decision-makers to explore fully the potential for changing the vehicle import business model alongside any decision about plans to barge cars from Bledisloe Wharf up the Tāmaki estuary.

The company envisages a potential new business model that would see cars discharged from vessels directly to purpose-built storage, vehicle preparation and distribution facilities immediately outside the deep-water port of Northport in Whangarei harbour. All in a single movement.

This would replace multiple movements in Auckland, both under the current model and under the proposed one.

These port-side storage facilities would give importers, manufacturers and dealers full access at any time to any vehicle, enabling them to cut back on infrastructure and offer just-in-time, customer-ready delivery.

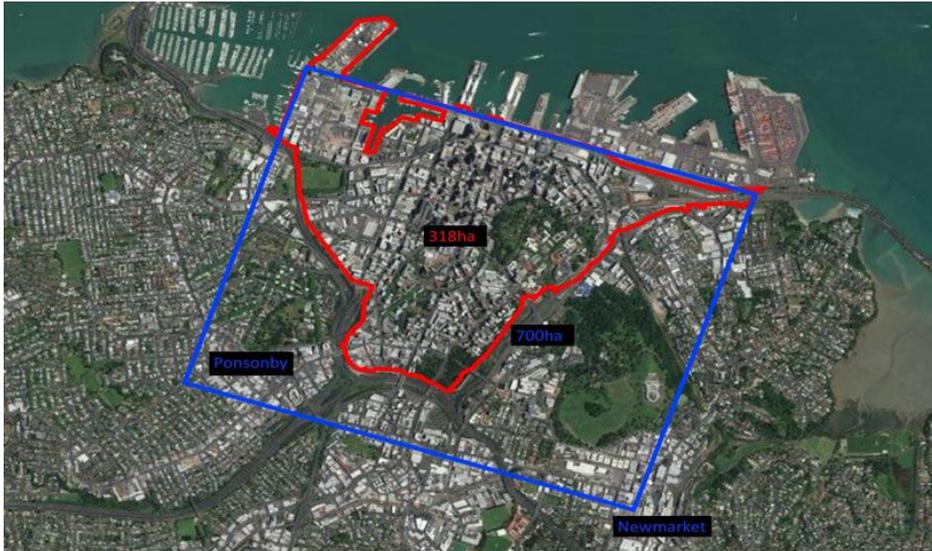
Ports of Auckland already has a stake in 180 hectares of greenfield development land at Marsden Point, through its 19.9 percent shareholding in Marsden Maritime Holdings.

65 hectares of this is port-zoned land which abuts directly onto the boundary of Northport. A further 115 hectares, designated as port zone and light industry, sits behind this. This is all available for long-term lease to companies wanting to make use of the port.

“That’s a combined potential area of 180ha, more than twice the area of the 77 hectares available at Ports of Auckland,” said Marsden Maritime Holdings Chairman Murray Jagger.

There is also another 520 hectares of commercially-zoned land nearby. This brings the amount of designated port and commercially-zoned land to 700 hectares, more than twice the amount of land occupied by the entire Auckland CBD.

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Space aside, Northport is ideally placed to receive vehicle imports. Marsden Maritime Holdings says Northport could comfortably accommodate today any car carrier operating in New Zealand. The port could store approximately 5,000 cars on a paved storage area within the port as an interim arrangement, a concept demonstrated in a video on Northport’s Vision for Growth website (<https://www.vision4growth.co.nz>).

“There is huge opportunity at this very moment to change the model of vehicle importation and distribution in the upper North Island, and to future-proof the vehicle industry,” Mr Jagger said. “We would like simply for those making the decisions about Auckland vehicle imports to take all options into account, including the Northport option.”

Mr Jagger said concerns about adding to traffic congestion on State Highway 1 could be addressed as part of the Northport option and a wider roading and transport strategy for Northland.

“We’re talking here about revolutionising the way the vehicle import industry is structured and logistics would be part of this discussion. Anything from the Auckland to Northport rail link already under investigation to a dedicated heavy-vehicle lane on State Highway 1. If all the players involved would be prepared to have a genuine, solutions-based discussion we are sure that the Northport option would emerge as a viable option for a revamped, streamlined and less obtrusive vehicle import industry.”

He said Marsden Maritime Holdings stood ready to engage with the North Island vehicle industry, Ports of Auckland and Auckland Council, and would “move mountains” to bring the Northport option into being.

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**NOTE:** High-res images available on request.

**NOTE:** Video interview with Mr Jagger available here: <https://digitalninja.sharefile.com/d-467ffe61045b4b2e>

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