

15 December 2023

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Stuff

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Tēnā koe ██████████

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 21 November 2023, in which you queried a variety of matters concerning the Chateau Tongariro including:

- Ongoing negotiations between DOC and previous leaseholders
- Costs incurred by DOC since taking over management
- Information about the future of the building.

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *Have negotiations between DOC and the previous leaseholders been concluded? If so, what was the result? If not, what is holding this up?*

Negotiations with the previous leaseholders are ongoing. Due to the nature of these negotiations (which are subject to legal privilege) we are unable to provide further details on how they are progressing at this time.

2. *Since DOC took over management of the site, how much has been spent on its maintenance?*

Since taking over management of the Chateau Tongariro and its ancillary buildings in March 2023, DOC has spent \$1.18 million. This figure accounts for maintenance, consultant costs, operating expenses (such as electricity), insurance and other compliance requirements.

3. *Has DOC got any idea how much it would cost to bring the site back to working order?*

Total costs cannot be confirmed at this stage. We need to consider options for the building and discuss matters with our treaty partners before full costings can be obtained for future preferred options.

4. *Has DOC got any closer to negotiating a new lease for the Chateau?*

As noted above we need to consider options for the building and discuss matters with our treaty partners before consideration of future leases of the building is considered. This is to ensure we make a well-informed and considered decision on the future of the Chateau Tongariro.

5. *How much interest has DOC received for its lease, and from whom?*

We have received approximately 18 enquiries of interest in the Chateau which were anticipated. These have been acknowledged and we continue to welcome interest in this historic place.

Once we have determined what the long-term future for the property could be, we will be in a better position to respond to any suggestions or proposals for its use.

DOC is keenly aware the Chateau is an iconic heritage building sitting at the gateway to the Tongariro National Park, which itself has Dual World Heritage for its natural and cultural heritage. We are committed to working with iwi and a range of stakeholders on these issues.

6. *Does DOC think the Chateau will reopen as a hotel in future?*

Significant investment will be required for the Chateau to reopen as a hotel. We need to consider the options for the building. This include discussing matters with our treaty partners before consideration of future leases of the building. This is to ensure we make a well-informed and considered decision on the future of the Chateau Tongariro.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā



CJ Juby
Director, Business Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai