

16 August 2023

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 08 June 2023, in which you asked for:

*please provide me with any and all work produced or held by you, including but not limited to advice provided to ministers, relating to the Chateau Tongariro and or its future. Please cover the period July 1, 2022 to the present.*

*My request includes, but is not limited to, all relevant reports, aides memoire, and briefings.*

*I also request all correspondence with iwi and hapu related to the future of the Chateau, this includes, but is not limited to, correspondence with Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Hikairo Ki Tongariro, and or any related groups or representatives.*

On 30 June 2023, we extended the timeframe to respond to your request to 11 August 2023 due to the large quantity of information and the consultations necessary to make a decision on the request. On 11 August 2023, we advised you of our decision on your request and that the final response would be sent to you on 16 August 2023.

On 17 July 2023, you clarified the first part of your request to documents about lease negotiations with the former lessee of the Chateau and the future of the Chateau.

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

DOC assumed management of the property on 9 March 2023 but there are still a number of residual matters to be concluded as could be expected with a 30-year lease of this nature.

Once the transition is complete the Department will turn its focus to considering the various options for the Chateau Tongariro Hotel into the future.



In the meantime, the Department is conducting ongoing routine maintenance to ensure the building remains in its current condition and work is ongoing to establish whether the building poses any structural or seismic risk to staff and others.

We can confirm we have received inquiries of interest in the Chateau, which were expected, and we welcome the interest in this historic place. We have acknowledged these and will address them more fully when we are in a position to do so.

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.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

- 1. All work produced or held by DOC including but not limited to advice provided to ministers, relating to lease agreements with Kah NZ and future of the Chateau Tongariro from July 1, 2022 to the present.*

Part of your request is refused subject to section 18(d) of the Official Information Act as the information is publicly available. For your reference, this information, up to 13 March 2023, was released under a previous OIA request and is published on our website [Official Information Act responses 2023 \(doc.govt.nz\)](#).

We have identified 7 additional documents within the scope of your request. These are listed for your reference in **Table 1** at the end of this letter.

- 2. all correspondence with iwi and hapu related to the future of the Chateau, this includes, but is not limited to, correspondence with Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Hikairo Ki Tongariro, and or any related groups or representatives.*

We have collated documents within scope of your request and these are detailed for your reference in **Table 1** at the end of this letter.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people,
- commercially sensitive information, under section 9(2)(b)(ii) – to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information, or who is the subject of the information,
- avoid prejudice to measures protecting the health or safety of members of the public, under section 9(2)(c),
- advice still under consideration, section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials,



- advice subject to legal privilege, under section 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege,
- confidential information, under section 9(2)(j) – to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act and determined there are no public interests that outweigh the grounds for withholding.

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) and attached documents may be published on the Department's website.



Nāku noa, nā



Karl Beckert  
Director, Operations Support  
Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*



**Table 1 - Schedule of documents**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Document description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1	2 February 2023	Briefing 23-B-0024: Closure of Chateau Tongariro	Released in full
2	2 February 2023 - 26 June 2023	Emails discussing the future of the Chateau	Released in part
3	8 February 2023 - 13 June 2023	Chateau Tongariro closure - Weekly Status Report	Released in part
4	28 March 2023	Briefing 23-B-0111: Update on the Chateau Tongariro	Released in part
5	1 February 2023 – 1 May 2023	Chateau Tongariro Hotel – Interest Register	Released in part
6	4 April 2023	Letter to Kah NZ	Released in part
7	February/March 2023	Correspondence with iwi RE Chateau	Released in part
8	20 February 2023	Report to DDG NORS about immediate closure issues	Withheld in full