

4 April 2023



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 3 February 2023 in which you asked for:

‘Correspondence between the operator of the Chateau Tongariro hotel and DoC about the potential extension of the Chateau lease, including the final notification from the operator of its decision to stop seeking a renewal, and DoC’s response to that notification;

Assessments of the cost of repairing structural issues found to need remediation at the Chateau.’

On 1 March 2023 we extended your request to 27 March 2023 due to the large quantity of information sought and consultation necessary to facilitate our response.

Your requests and our responses are listed below:

1. Correspondence between the operator of the Chateau Tongariro hotel and the Department about the potential extension of the Chateau lease.

The former operator of the Chateau Tongariro, Kah New Zealand Limited (**KNZ**), first expressed interest in renewing their lease on 27 January 2017. I have compiled all correspondence between KNZ and the Department on this matter from this date until 6 February 2023, when KNZ formally notified the Department they were terminating their lease.

We are releasing the documents covering this correspondence as outlined below. We are also providing you with two documents (an email thread and part of a memo) which show the Department accepted the final offer terms KNZ outlined in their April 2020 letter to the us. KNZ then chose not to complete the agreement, instead continuing their tenancy on a month-by-month basis until this year.

I am releasing the following documents:

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
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1	27/01/2017 – 22/12/2017	Correspondence between Kah New Zealand Limited and the Department in the year 2017.	Released in part
2	8 January 2018 – 15 March 2018	Correspondence between Kah New Zealand Limited and the Department in the year 2018 (January to March).	Released in part
3	11 April 2018 – 12 September 2018	Correspondence between Kah New Zealand Limited and the Department in the year 2018 (April to December).	Released in part
4	17 September 2019 – 6 February 2023	Correspondence between Kah New Zealand Limited and the Department in the years 2019 - 2023.	Released in part
5	17 April 2020	Memo recommending the Department accept revised offer from Kah New Zealand Limited	Released in part
6	23 April 2020	Email detailing Deputy Director General approval of recommendation in April 17 memo	Released in part

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,
- information which is subject to an obligation of confidence 9(2)(ba)(i) - where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source,
- confidential information, under section 9(2)(i) - to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities
- confidential information, under section 9(2)(j) – to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice.

Some information has also been withheld as it was either out of scope of your request or refused in full. Further information on documents refused in full is provided below:

The TIA Opex Report 2017 is included in correspondence between Kah New Zealand Limited and the Department. Due to the commercially sensitive nature of this document, it is refused under section 18(a) by virtue of having grounds to withhold under section 9(2)(b)(ii) to protect the commercial position of the person who supplied the information.



Commissioned rental assessment reports from both DOC and KAH NZ limited are included in correspondence between both parties. These are refused in full under section 18(a) of the by virtue of having grounds to withhold under section 9(2)(i). This is due to the commercially sensitive nature of material which is withheld to - enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities.

2. Assessments of the cost of repairing structural issues found to need remediation at the Chateau.

We do not hold any information regarding the cost of repairing structural issues at the Chateau, as we have not received the Detailed Seismic Assessment commissioned by KNZ. While we have asked for this report from KNZ, they are under no obligation to provide this to us.

This aspect of your request is refused in full under section 18(g) of the Official Information Act as the information requested is not held by the Department.

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 which 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.

[REDACTED]

Nāku noa, nā

[REDACTED]

Steve Taylor
Director, Regulatory Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai