

18 August 2026

Ref: OIAD-9364

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 30 June 2026, concerning communications about vehicle access at Waikawa Beach, Horowhenua, and the land subject to Horowhenua District Council's vehicle-access easement application.

Your original request sought copies of communications received by DOC between November 2025 and 30 June 2026 relating to the Waikawa Beach vehicle-access area and/or the land subject to Horowhenua District Council's current easement application.

On 27 July 2026, DOC extended the time for responding by 14 working days under section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA, to 18 August 2026. Initial scoping had identified nearly 1,000 digital records that could potentially be relevant, together with a considerable number of third parties.

The extension was necessary because the consultations required to make a decision on the request meant that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

At your request, DOC staff met with you by Microsoft Teams on 4 August 2026 to discuss a practical refinement. Following that meeting, you confirmed by email on 4 August 2026 that your primary interest was correspondence from third parties within the Waikawa Beach community about the easement/concession application.

You asked DOC to search for correspondence from, or on behalf of:

- Horowhenua District Councillor [REDACTED]
- Waikawa Beach Environment Group;
- Walk on Waikawa;
- Waikawa Beach Residents Association;
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- other individuals acting on behalf of the named groups.

You also asked for any substantive responses provided by DOC within the refined period, any file notes, meeting notes, telephone records, diary notes or other records documenting relevant discussions with the named people or groups, and any records in the concession application's submission register identifying submissions, representations, objections or stakeholder engagement.

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

DOC identified the correspondence and related DOC records listed below as relevant to your refined request. The documents are enclosed with this response as Attachments One to Eleven. Where an email chain repeats earlier correspondence in full, duplicate copies have not been provided again. Duplicate copies of the same supporting documents have also been removed. This does not affect the substantive information being released.

We only found documents in scope from Walk on Waikawa. Names of individuals have been redacted under section 9(2)(a) to protect their privacy where they were acting as representatives of Walk on Waikawa.

Some information has also been withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between DOC employees in the course of their duties.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA and do not consider that the public interest outweighs the need to withhold the information.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review by an Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

[Redacted signature block]

Nāku noa, nā



Phillippa Fox
Director Regulatory Authorisations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Documents released

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	8–9 December 2025	Walk on Waikawa correspondence concerning the proposed vehicle-access easement and related DOC handling.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a) and s9(2)(g)(i).
2	18 December 2025–29 January 2026	Walk on Waikawa correspondence concerning the HDC easement application and related DOC responses.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
3	21–22 January 2026	DOC correspondence concerning the Waikawa Conservation Area, vehicle access, consent issues and possible notification.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
4	8–9 March 2026	Walk on Waikawa correspondence and letter concerning the HDC easement application.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
5	27–30 March 2026	Walk on Waikawa public-notification correspondence, related DOC handling and corrected letter.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
6	7–8 April 2026	DOC correspondence concerning Waikawa Beach vehicle access and a possible response to Walk on Waikawa.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
7	13 April 2026	Walk on Waikawa correspondence and proposed conditions for the HDC easement application.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
8	29 April–6 May 2026	Walk on Waikawa follow-up correspondence and related DOC handling.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
9	3–4 June 2026	DOC correspondence concerning the handling of and response position on Walk on Waikawa correspondence.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
10	12 June 2026	DOC email concerning the draft decline recommendation for permission 125600-OTH.	Released in full.
11	14 June 2026	Walk on Waikawa correspondence seeking an update and meeting.	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).
12	9 March 2026	Walk on Waikawa - Text correspondence	Released in part – s 9(2)(a).



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government