



12 May 2026

Tāmaki Makaurau /
Auckland Office
Level 19, Te Wharau o
Tamaki/Auckland House
135 Albert Street
Auckland 1010
doc.govt.nz
Ref: OIAD-6253

Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your request for evidence of the current lease arrangements that was transferred from Auckland Council to the Department of Conservation on 15 April 2026:

“Please provide evidence of the current lease agreements that authorise these private residential dwellings on Crown reserve land.”

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

By way of context, the Whangateau Cemetery, gazetted in 1892, is owned by the Crown through this department as an unclassified cemetery reserve subject to the Reserves Act 1977. A Trust Board appointed by past Government agencies and Councils, most recently under the Burials and Cremations Act 1964, has managed the cemetery for many years.

In the 1930s and 1940s, nine baches were built along the periphery of the reserve along the shoreline of Lews Bay, Whangateau. A reclamation and seawall near the baches was also erected at this time. All structures were erected without authorisation from the former Department of Lands and Survey, which administered the Reserves Act at that time.

Our records show that the original leases were agreed in 1979 between the lessees and the Rodney County Council. In 1984, it appeared that an agreement between the Cemetery Board and Rodney County Council was reached whereby the bach owners and their spouses would be granted lifetime leases, after which the baches would be removed.

The Department does not hold information relating to more recent lease arrangements, including current leases, as any arrangements here would be between the lessees and Rodney County Council or its successors. Therefore, your request for current leases is refused in accordance with s18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist or cannot be found. I understand Auckland Council is currently reviewing its archived material and will respond further if they identify any information relating to leases issued in 1984 or subsequent years.

We are however, able to provide you with copies of the 1979 licences for the baches, which may be of interest to you. The Department is also releasing the letter from Whangateau Cemetery Board accepting the life tenancy proposal. Please note that given the age of the bach licence, it is of poor quality and difficult to read. We are happy to post a hard copy of this licence but note that the quality is only marginally more legible.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	12 September 1984	Letter from the Whangateau Cemetery Board to Rodney County Council	Released in part
2	29 December 1979	Licence for Whangateau baches	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 information, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

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.

[Redacted signature area]

Nāku noa, nā



Alex Rogers
Director - Regional Operations
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai