

Reference Number: 2023/1018

9 November 2023

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### Response - Official Information Request

I refer to your request for information received on 19 October 2023. Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and I provide the following information.

***“In the event the project does advance to resource consent stage, why isn't the stated landowner of the Huritini 6B block the entity that has to apply for the resource consent?”***

Section 88 of the Resource Management Act of 1991 clarifies the applicant for a resource consent does not need to be the owner of the land, or to have any interest in the land, in order to apply for a consent.

Council has resolved to consult on three options in relation to this matter, and the decision is on the public record. It is not for Council to comment further on the potential outcomes of a yet-to-be-held public consultation.

***“The established access route has already been washed out. Why does Council therefore think it is a good idea to build a road that would, in all likelihood, wash out too?”***

Council has been requested by the Waikawa Beach community to investigate options relating to providing vehicular access to the beach. It has undertaken an initial assessment that has indicated access for vehicles is possible. Council has resolved to consult further on three options and that matter is on public record.

***“How does this project reflect Council's commitment to Climate Change resilience?”***

Horowhenua District Council is a member of the Manawatū-Whanganui Climate Action Joint Committee, which recognises that climate change requires urgent and collective action. The four key areas outlined in the Committee's recently released Climate Change Action Plan include: Empowering communities, working with nature, addressing known issues, and supporting good decisions. As such, Council have explored and presented several options pertaining to Waikawa Beach Vehicle Access, which outline the pros and cons of each action as they relate to the natural habitat of the area including wetlands, dune ecosystems as well as the Waikawa Beach Community.

Further to this, Council will seek guidance from our community on climate change resilience in the upcoming Long Term Plan 2024-2044, which will inform Council's own Climate Change Action Plan.

***“Now the expressway to North Levin will be turbo charged under a National-led government, is it Council's intention to promote roads to beaches as part of its "growth" agenda?”***

Council have not been informed of any change to the timing of the Ōtaki to North of Levin delivery programme.

Council have no specific plans around promoting roads to beaches at this stage.

***“Will the expected increase in traffic going to the beach be included in any resource consent in the event an application is made?”***

The information requested is not held by the local authority, and Officers have no grounds for believing that the information is either held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation. Consequently, your request for information is refused under Section 17g(i) of the Act.

***“How much is the Council prepared to spend to drive this project forward?”***

Officers were provided a budget of \$310,000 to investigate beach access options in the annual plan of 2023/2024. No further budgetary commitments have been resolved by Council.

***“So, has the Council got a more realistic estimate of the potential resource consent costs for the project or does it want to reaffirm the \$150,000 and \$500,000 amount?”***

Potential estimates for resource consents advised at the Council Meeting of 11 October 2023 were based on the costs suggested by Council's consultant (Boffa Miskell). Council has no confirmed costs for the likely cost of consents on any of the options discussed.

Other costs that were omitted included (a) the potential cost to the community of a lease agreement across what's called the Huritini 6B Block (b) legal costs associated with the resource consent and challenges to the ownership and legality of the Huritini 6B block title (c) on-going river maintenance costs and (d) "river training" costs.

***“Other costs that were omitted included (a) the potential cost to the community of a lease agreement across what's called the Huritini 6B Block (b) legal costs associated with the resource consent and challenges to the ownership and legality of the Huritini 6B block title (c) on-going river maintenance costs and (d) "river training" costs.***

***What is the estimated cost of the project including all the related costs above?”***

Council possesses no information on the likely costs of establishing the proposed beach access other than those identified in its report Waikawa Beach Vehicle Access which was presented at the Council meeting of the 11 October 2023 and that information is within the public domain. Council has no estimates of the total likely cost of installing a vehicle access to Waikawa Beach and is not in a position to comment on the matter prior to the current consultation being finalised. Consequently your request for information is refused under section 17g(i) of the Act.

***“How much does it cost to do "river training"?”***

Council possesses no information on the likely costs of establishing the proposed beach access other than those identified in its report Waikawa Beach Vehicle Access which was presented at the Council meeting of the 11 October 2023. This information is in the public domain. Your question around likely costs of river training would therefore be better directed to Horizons Regional Council where potential estimates to undertake possible aspects of River Training were identified in the “Waikawa Beach, Coastal, Geomorphological Assessment and Management Options’ report prepared by Tonkin and Taylor Limited for Horizons Regional Council in March 2022.

***“What budget does the "river training" come out of?”***

No budget has been identified for any physical works other than the original 310k to investigate beach access options provided in the annual plan of 2023/2024.

***“How much has been spent on "river training" to date including the cost of applying for a resource consent to do "river training"?”***

Records indicate that \$54,628.20 has been spent by HDC on various aspects of physical work related to the management of Waikawa Stream since 2000. In respect of the second part of your question relating to likely consent costs, Council would not investigate the matter prior to completing the current consultation process.

***“Does the informal accessway to the beach operate without a resource consent at present?”***

The information requested is not held by the local authority and Officers have no grounds for believing that the information is either held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation. Consequently, your request is refused under section 17g(i) of the Act.

***“How much has the leasing arrangement with the stated owners of the Huritini 6B Block cost ratepayers to date?”***

The landowner has provided access to the beach across its land at no charge to the community for several decades. There is no formal leasing arrangement with Council.

***“How much is it expected the leasing arrangement will cost ratepayers in the future annually?”***

Council as part of its consultation process will speak to the private landowner concerned around potential access, however no agreement for ongoing use of the land for the purpose requested is in place. If Council were to progress with such an option it is likely information would be withheld under section 7(2)(a) of the Act, thereby protecting the privacy of natural persons.

***“Also excluded from the report was any information on how many vehicles drive on to the beach now. I only heard one casual question by mayor Bernie Wanden about how many vehicles access the beach for fishing. So, does the Council intend to do some research on trying to realistically estimate the likely number accessing the beach with vehicles? Surely a resource consent application would require this information too.”***

In respect of your question above in relation to current vehicle use, the information requested is not held by the local authority and Officers have no grounds for believing that the information is either held by another local authority or a department or Minister of the Crown or organisation. Consequently, your request is refused under section 17g(i) of the Act.

In response to the second part of your question Council has resolved to consult on three options in relation to this matter, and the decision is on the public record. It is not for Council to comment further on the potential outcomes of a yet-to-be-held public consultation, or indeed what evidence may or may not be required to apply for a potential future resource consent.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or free phone 0800 802 602.

Horowhenua District Council publishes responses to Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) requests that we consider to be of wider public interest, or which relate to a subject that has been widely requested. To protect your privacy, we will not generally publish personal information about you, or information that identifies you. We will publish the LGOIMA response along with a summary of the request on our website. Requests and responses may be paraphrased.

If you have any queries regarding this information, please contact Brent Harvey on 

Ngā mihi



Steve McTaylor-Biggs  
**Executive Sponsor**