

20 September 2023

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Tēnā koe ██████████

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 26 August 2023, regarding the publicly bookable huts at Loch Katrine.

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *I have reviewed the response and note that there did not appear to be anything extending the lease term beyond the expiry of 31 January 2024. Does this mean there has not been an extension? Is the intention of DOC to take advantage of clause 30.3 to take control of the huts or will an extension be granted?*

The Concessionaire has lodged a new concession application for this activity. This application will be publicly notified in due course. Any person or organisation may make a submission in writing to the Director-General during the Public Notification process. This occurs before a decision on the application is made.

Should a decision on the application not be made prior to the expiry of the current concession, the Concessionaire will be entitled to continue to operate beyond expiry, until a decision is made, as per section 17ZAA of the Conservation Act 1987.

As a decision has not been made on the application it is not known whether DOC will take control of the huts if a concession is not granted.

2. *P42 mentions the logbook which will be provided to DOC for the period from Nov 2013 onward (i.e. first to Feb 2014, and then annually on 31 Jan). Can you please provide a copy of these logbooks?*

As per Schedule 3, Clause 28 of the concession the Concessionaire has the option to provide booking logs to DOC *on request*. Copies of these booking logs were requested and provided by the Concessionaire for the 2014 / 2015 and 2022 / 2023 years. I have decided to release the relevant parts of these documents listed below, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	01 March 2015	Loch Katrine Association inc. Hut Booking Log 2014 / 2015	Released in part, Sec 9(2)(a)
2	07 March 2023	Loch Katrine Association inc. Hut Booking Log 2022 / 2023	Released in part, Sec 9(2)(a)

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

DOC has not requested booking logs for other years and therefore we do hold them to release. This part of your request is therefore declined under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA as the information requested is not held by DOC, and we have no reason to believe they are held by another agency.

3. *Have you requested any evidence that the obligations under schedule 2 clause 2 are being adhered to?*

There are two toilet facilities at Loch Katrine; one for the public that DOC manage and one for the publicly bookable huts that are maintained by the Concessionaire. The Concessionaire is responsible for maintenance of the toilet facilities associated with the publicly bookable huts. When DOC monitor the activity, this is one of the conditions that is checked.

DOC monitored the activity in September 2020 and April 2023. On both occasions the toilet facilities were found to be in a clean and tidy condition, with cleaning records maintained.

DOC monitors a number of concessions each year to ensure conditions are being met, however if information is received at any other time from the public that conditions are not being met, we manage this with the Concessionaire on a case-by-case basis.

4. *Schedule 3 Clause 27 has never been adhered to when I have been out at Loch Katrine. there is very limited information available to the public on the availability of these huts. It is like both DOC and the association are making it as difficult as possible for the public to book these huts.*

When monitoring of this concession was carried out, DOC observed that the Concessionaire was compliant with the requirements of Schedule 3, Clause 27, by displaying notices that provide details of how to book the cabins. This information is also displayed on the DOC website for the Loch Katrine campsite under the heading 'About this campsite':

www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/lake-sumner-forest-park/things-to-do/campsites/loch-katrine-campsite/



5. *Can you provide evidence that schedule 3 clause 32 has been being adhered to / provide copies of the audited financial statements that are required to be provided to DOC?*

DOC has not requested audited financial statements, or other evidence, to monitor Schedule 3 clause 32. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA as the information requested is not held by DOC, and we have no reason to believe it is held by another agency.

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 OIA.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

[Redacted]

Nāku noa, nā

[Redacted]

Sarah Owen
Director, Regulatory Services
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai