

Christchurch Regional Office

Level 3
Grand Central
161 Cashel Street
Christchurch 8011

doc.govt.nz

Ref: OIAD-5818

30 January 2026

Tēnā koe [REDACTED],

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 07 November 2025, in which you sought information concerning the Chateau Tongariro, its status and future use options.

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

On 17 November 2025 you clarified (or refined) aspect 5 of your request by confirming that you were only seeking material between October 2024 – November 2025. A previous question concerning the Chateau Tongariro's heritage obligations was also withdrawn.

On 15 December 2025 we extended the timeframe to respond to your request to 27 January 2026 due to due to the consultation necessary with impacted third parties.

On 27 January 2026 we made a decision on your request and noted that additional time was required to prepare material for release. We also stated that this documentation would be provided to you no later than 30 January 2026.

For context, DOC has been instructed by the Minister of Conservation to explore undertaking a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the Chateau and to engage with iwi. An RFP is a competitive market process to identify potential lessees, after which any preferred respondent would still need to apply for a concession through a separate statutory process.

DOC has not yet commenced a formal RFP process as further advice will be provided to the Minister in relation to this and other long-term Chateau options before any formal decision to proceed is made.

Note: Identified in scope material and what can be released at this time is impacted by the status of a draft Cabinet paper which concerns Chateau future use options. Once the Cabinet paper has been finalised (and decisions made), additional material can be reconsidered for release.

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. *The most recent internal and external photographs or video of the Chateau Tongariro building taken or held by the Department, showing the building's condition since its closure in February 2023.*

DOC itself has not taken any official internal or external photographs of the Chateau Tongariro. However, photographs of the building are embedded in several third-party reports on its condition (commissioned to inform future use decision making). This

includes a 2023 Building Condition Appraisal Report which can be accessed below via the link provided (in response to question 2).

2. *The most recent seismic, structural, or condition assessments, including any engineering or safety reports commissioned or received by the Department since January 2023.*

Several in scope reports are publicly available and can be accessed at:

- Chateau Tongariro Building Condition Appraisal - <https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2023/november/oia-3433-attachment-1.pdf>
- Chateau Tongariro Seismic Strengthening Estimate (page 18 to 51) - <https://fyi.org.nz/request/29237/response/116269/attach/4/OIAD%204689%20attachment%20Questions%201%20and%202%20DOC%207861027%201.pdf>
- Chateau Tongariro Peer Review Report for WSP Detailed Seismic Assessment - <https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2024/november/oia-4599-attachment-1.pdf>

The Chateau was transferred to the Department in March 2023. At that time, the Department was also provided with a copy of a detailed seismic assessment (WSP DSA) commissioned by the previous lessee. This document is provided and accompanies our response as Attachment 1. The details of this document are outlined in the schedule of documents table.

3. *Details of maintenance or security costs incurred since closure, including total annual expenditure and the nature of any works carried out, up to the present day.*

From 1 March 2023 to 30 November 2025, a total of \$2,428,765.63 was incurred. This figure includes only costs directly related to the repairs/maintenance (R&M) and security of the Chateau. It does not include other costs accumulated since its closure, such as levies, rates, and fees for contractors and consultants. A further breakdown of these costs is provided below

Category	Sum of Actual \$ March 2023 to June 2023	Sum of Actual \$ July 2023 to June 2024	Sum of Actual \$ July 2024 to June 2025	Sum of Actual \$ July 2025 to November 2025
R&M	\$227,243.51	\$902,265.9	\$452,416.3	\$226,979.87
Security	\$4,705.32	\$254,995.15	\$249,279.58	\$110,880

Maintenance and security works associated with this expenditure include a range of routine and as-required services. Repairs and maintenance activities are undertaken as needed and include, for example, addressing building issues such as leaks, carrying out general maintenance tasks, and purchasing equipment necessary to complete repairs. Planned servicing also includes lift inspections, fire system inspections, and door servicing. In addition, this spend covers utilities such as gas and electricity, including associated line fees, as well as pest control services and regular lawn mowing. Security-related expenditure relates to the provision of contracted security services, including patrols of the Chateau premises.

4. *Information and documentation relating to the Expressions of Interest (EOI) process referenced publicly in 2024 including the number of parties that expressed interest, the general nature of that interest, and any summaries, evaluations, or advice produced.*

The EOI was a targeted market sounding exercise where 20 parties were approached and seven parties agreed to take part.

The majority of information in scope of this aspect of your request has been proactively released and is accessible via links provided in the schedule of documents table.

We have also identified the following in scope document which is withheld in full:

- *“DOC Chateau Tongariro Market Sounding Report 26 March 2025”* this is withheld in full subject to section 9(2)(i) - to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities;
5. *Copies of briefings, correspondence, or reports provided to or from the Minister of Conservation, Cabinet, or other agencies concerning the future of the Chateau Tongariro – including options for demolition, restoration, or new lease arrangements*

Briefings

We have identified three Briefings for release. These Briefings are outlined in the schedule of documents table and accompany our response as Attachment 2 (items 1 – 3).

We have also identified the following in-scope documents that cannot be released at this time and are therefore withheld in full. This reflects the status of the draft Cabinet paper. Once the Cabinet paper has been finalised and provided, this material can be reconsidered for release:

- *25-B-0160 Briefing: Chateau Tongariro draft Cabinet paper – Options for next steps*, this document is withheld in full subject to section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the

current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials; and

- *25-B-0304 Briefing: Revised Chateau Cabinet paper for Ministerial consultation*, this document is withheld in full subject to section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.
- *Cabinet Paper - Chateau Tongariro Options for Next Steps* - this document is withheld in full subject to section 9(2)(f)(iv) - to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.

Chateau future options Correspondence

Copies of correspondence in scope of your request is provided and accompanies our response as Attachment 3 (items 1 - 7). For a further breakdown of correspondence provided please refer to the schedule of documents table.

I have decided to release relevant parts of documents listed in the table schedules below, subject to information being withheld under one or more of the following sections of the OIA, as applicable:

- personal information, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people,
- advice still under consideration, section 9(2)(f)(iv) – to maintain the current constitutional conventions protecting the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials,
- free and frank expression under section 9(2)(g)(i) – to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs,
- advice subject to legal privilege, under section 9(2)(h) - to maintain legal professional privilege,
- commercially sensitive information, under section 9(2)(i) - to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry out, without prejudice or disadvantage, commercial activities, and
- confidential information, under section 9(2)(j) – to enable the Crown to negotiate without disadvantage or prejudice.

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.

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 attached documents may be published on DOC's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Baththana', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Shan Baththana
Director Asset Management
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Document schedule

OIAD-5818 – Attachment 1 (Chateau DSA)			
Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	24 February 2023	Chateau Tongariro - Detailed Seismic Assessment	Released in part

OIAD-5818 – Attachment 2 (Briefings)			
Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	16 October 2024	24-B-0281 Briefing – Chateau Tongariro Options for Next Steps	Released in part
2	15 September 2025	25-B-0417 Update on the Chateau and draft letter to Iwi inviting a site inspection	Released in part
3	5 November 2025	ADVB-15 - Briefing - Leasing the Chateau Tongariro	Released in part

OIAD-5818 – Attachment 3 (inter-agency correspondence)			
Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	10 – 14 October 2024	Chateau Tongariro - Department of Internal Affairs correspondence with DOC	Released in part
2	10 October 2024 – 12 November 2025	Chateau Tongariro – Minister of Conservation correspondence with DOC	Released in part
3	16 October 2024 – 19 June 2025	Chateau Tongariro - Ministry of Culture and Heritage correspondence with DOC	Released in part
4	27 June 2025	Chateau Tongariro - Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment correspondence with DOC	Released in part
5	10 October 2024 – 23 June 2025	Chateau Tongariro – Te Tari Whakatau (formerly Te Arawhiti) correspondence with DOC	Released in part
6	16 October 2024 – 25 July 2025	Chateau Tongariro - Te Waihanga (New Zealand Infrastructure Commission) correspondence with DOC	Released in part
7	10 October 2024 – 17 June 2025	Chateau Tongariro – Treasury New Zealand correspondence with DOC	Released in part

OIAD-5818 – Question 4 (publicly available in scope material)		
Date	Document description	Decision
27 January 2024	Status report week commencing 27 January 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/april/oia-4853-attachment.pdf
29 January 2024	Status report week commencing 29 January 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2024/april/oia-3907-attachment-1.pdf
17 February 2025	Status report week commencing 17 February 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/september/oia-5578-combined-documents.pdf
7 April 2025	Status report week commencing 7 April 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/september/oia-5578-combined-documents.pdf
5 May 2025	Status report week commencing 5 May 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/september/oia-5578-combined-documents.pdf
12 May 2025	Status report week commencing 2 May 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/september/oia-5578-combined-documents.pdf
17 June 2024	Status report week commencing 17 June 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2024/october/oia-4297-attachment-1.pdf
7 July 2025	Status report week commencing 7 July 2025	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2025/september/oia-5578-combined-documents.pdf
15 July 2024	Status report week commencing 15 July 2024	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2024/october/oia-4297-attachment-1.pdf
12 August 2024	24-B-0385 Briefing: Chateau Tongariro Expression of Interest update and options for next steps	Proactively released. Please refer to: https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/oia/2024/november/oia-4509-attachment-1.pdf

