

Whakatū | Nelson Regional Office

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29 January 2026

Our Ref: OIAD-5990

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 5 January 2026, in which you asked:

*“ Please can you advise under OIA that the beach that we the public funded at Awaroa in 2016 remains in the Public Domain and access remains in perpetuity?  
..Also please advise that the beaches themselves were not included in the Tenth Settlement. ”*

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

### **Settlement - Te Here-ā-Nuku Trust**

As announced in a December 2025 media release, the ownership of approximately 7,583 acres (3,068 hectares) of Top of the South land will be restored to descendants of its original owners, following a long-standing private litigation. See: <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/historic-agreement-top-south-island-land>

The Crown and the owners, descendants of Te Taihū Māori (represented by Te Here-ā-Nuku Trust), have agreed to allow continued public access to areas of public conservation land included in the settlement.

The map published when the settlement was announced only showed indicative boundaries of Crown land being restored to Te Here-ā-Nuku Trust. There are some outstanding matters to work through with respect to specific parcels of land over the coming months, with both parties committed to resolving these details.

### **Department's response**

We can provide you with the following information in relation to the specific areas that you have referenced in your request.

Your questions and our responses are listed below.

1. *“Please can you advise under OIA that the beach that we the public funded at Awaroa in 2016 remains in the Public Domain and access remains in perpetuity.”*

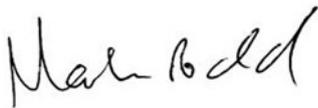
Awaroa Beach will remain in Crown ownership, as part of Abel Tasman National Park.

2. *“Please advise that the beaches themselves were not included in the Tenth Settlement.”*

The beaches that are within the Abel Tasman Foreshore Scenic Reserve (comprising land between the Mean High Water Mark and Mean Low Water Mark) are not included in the settlement.

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

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Rodd". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Martin Rodd  
Director Regional Operations, Northern South Island  
Department of Conservation | *Te Papa Atawhai*