



OIAD-65

9(2)(a)

9(2)(a)

Dear 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your further email of 21 June 2021 stating the following:

So, to clarify, since it's what the council has indicated - the applications were declined by WMF not because of environmental concerns but because of the business case?

The WMF / MfE had no concerns about the environmental impacts of Terax?

The Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) has considered and logged your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

The Ministry has identified two documents in scope of your request. These are letters to Terax Partnerships Limited (Terax) and Rotorua Lakes Council (the Council) declining their applications for the Waste Minimisation Fund. The letters provide the reasons the applications were declined.

Some information within these letters is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: ministerials@mfe.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Lewis'.

Shaun Lewis
Director - Systems Change and Investment

Released under the provision of
the Official Information Act 1982

Document schedule

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	29 August 2016	Waste Minimisation Fund application – letter	Release in part	S9(2)(a)
2	17 March 2017	Waste Minimisation Fund application – letter	Release in part	S9(2)(a)

Released under the provision of the Official Information Act 1982



29 August 2016

s9(2)(a)

Terax Limited Partnership
s9(2)(a)@terax.co.nz

Dear s9(2)(a)

Waste Minimisation Fund application

Thank you very much for submitting your application entitled "Terax® Rotorua Waste Conversion Plant" which was received in the May 2016 funding round of the Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF). We appreciate the significant amount of work that is involved in preparing an application.

After full consideration of all the applications received, your request for funding has been unsuccessful. A total of 39 eligible applications were received during this round, requesting approximately \$33.8 million in funding.

An independent panel assessed all applications and provided recommendations to the Minister for the Environment. All applications were assessed against the full range of WMF assessment criteria.

The applications that were successful are those that the panel considered are likely to significantly reduce harm to the environment or minimise the amount of waste disposed of. These applications typically demonstrated good support from relevant project partners, were based on proven technology or methodologies, included strong governance arrangements and included detailed budgets that were well thought out.

Specific comments on your application include:

- The panel acknowledges that biosolids are a challenging waste stream to address.
- The application does not adequately explain why the last project did not proceed
- Feasibility of continuous processing of biosolids using the pilot plant is not demonstrated in the application
- The application does not adequately address questions around whether future resource consent conditions could be met
- It is unclear where heavy metals would end up
- A key benefit of the Terax technology would be to extract nutrients, however this has not been covered in the economic modelling
- The panel consider that maintenance costs are not adequately covered in application
- There is inadequate risk analysis provided given the unproven new technology
- For a project of this size the financial information provided is inadequate
- Any future application should include the pilot plant optimisation report on continuous processing of biosolids and address the panel's comments.

The Minister for the Environment makes the final decision on which projects proceed to Stage II of the application process.

If you would like to contact the Ministry for the Environment to discuss feedback on your application or a future application or have any other questions about the WMF please contact us by email wmf@mfe.govt.nz or by phoning Emma Bonner on 0800 499 700.

The next round of the WMF opens on 1 October 2016.

Yours sincerely



Kees Hyink
Manager, Waste and Resources

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the Official Information Act 1982



17 March 2017

s9(2)(a)

Rotorua District Council

s9(2)(a) @rotorualc.nz

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a),

Ngā mihi I ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā ki a koe,

Waste Minimisation Fund application

Thank you very much for submitting your application entitled “*Terax® Rotorua Waste Conversion Plant*”, which was received in the October 2016 funding round of the Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF). We appreciate the significant amount of work that is involved in preparing an application.

After full consideration of all the applications received, I regret to inform you that your request for funding has been unsuccessful. A total of 38 eligible applications were received during this round, requesting approximately \$37 million in funding.

An independent panel assessed all applications and provided recommendations to the Minister for the Environment. All applications were assessed against the full range of WMF assessment criteria.

The applications that were successful are those that the panel considered are likely to significantly reduce harm to the environment or minimise the amount of waste disposed of. The panel was cognisant of the history of the project. However, the panel felt that not all concerns that had previously been raised had been adequately addressed in this application, and therefore continued funding is not justified at this point.

Some other specific comments on your applications include:

- The panel noted two key areas of concern; financial viability and questions around the technology
- Governance levels and financial controls seem appropriate given the project’s scale; however the project does not appear to be financially viable without significant ongoing investment from funding partners.
- The application states that the value of the plant will remain at \$12M after 20 years, which is not realistic. Without this assumption the project does not appear to be financially viable.

The Minister for the Environment makes the final decision on which projects proceed to Stage II of the application process.

If you would like to contact the Ministry for the Environment to discuss the feedback on your application, or a future application, or have any other questions about the WMF, please contact us by email wmf@mfe.govt.nz or by phone on 0800 499 700.

Nāku noa, nā



Hinemoa Awatere
Manager, Hono Tātaki – Resource Efficiency & Innovation

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the Official Information Act 1982