

Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust
6 Woods Road
Whangārei
0110

15 March 2021

Ministry for the Environment
Attention: Sara Clarke
Manager, Fast-track Consenting
fasttrackconsenting@mfe.co.nz

Tena koe Sara

s 9(2)(f)(ii), s 9(2)(f)(iv) Otawere and Water Storage Reservoir Projects: Confirmation on processing applications under COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020

The purpose of this letter is to respond to your request for confirmation on how Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust (the Trust) would like the Minister for the Environment to proceed with its applications for s 9(2)(f)(ii), s 9(2)(f) Otawere water storage reservoir projects to be referred to expert consenting panels under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020.

s 9(2)(f)(ii), s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Application 34 – Otawere Water Storage Reservoir

You raised two matters in relation to the Otawere Water Storage Reservoir project:

1. The scope of the application excludes the filling of the reservoir with water from the Waiaruheiti Stream; and
2. The scope of the application excludes the construction of distribution infrastructure.

Regarding the first, the Trust lodged an application¹ with Northland Regional Council, on 25 February 2021, for a water permit to authorise the taking of water from the Waiaruheiti Stream for the primary purpose of augmenting water levels in the Otawere Water Storage Reservoir. This consent would enable the Trust to harvest water above median flows having regard to other consented and permitted water allocation. Due to the relatively straightforward nature of the application the Trust

¹ APP.042560.01.01

did not consider that it warranted referral under the fast track process. We understand that the application will not be notified, and the council has not requested further information pursuant to section 92 of the RMA. The decision date is currently Thursday, 25 March 2021.

The Trust has recently obtained consent for takes of a similar nature from four streams for a water supply scheme it is developing on the Pouto peninsular from the Northland Regional Council. This consent, authorising a total instantaneous take of 1,000L/s, was non-notified.

Regarding the second matter, the Trust excluded the distribution infrastructure from the scope of the application as:

- It can provide general location and information of pipe networks however the exact detail will be dependent on the final location and demand of individual water users. Obtaining consent for construction of the water reservoir, and the nature of conditions, is a key factor in water users confirming their intention to connect to the scheme and how much allocation they wish to procure.
- Consenting requirements, if any, for the pipe network are far less restrictive than the reservoir construction and operation;
- Developing detailed design drawings and obtaining permissions for the pipe network prior to confirming consent for the reservoir, and subsequent confirmation of water users, has a high risk of requiring re-work.

We agree that the reticulation network is intrinsic to delivering the full economic potential of the reservoir and confirm that the Trusts funding Agreement with the PGF includes for its construction. The Trust is currently procuring contracting services for the design and construction of the network and has developed standards for the network construction.

We politely request that the Ministry consider the information provided above and continue its evaluation of our application for referral of the Otawere Water Storage Reservoir under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020. If you consider that inclusion of information regarding the pipe network is material in this decision we would be able to provide that to you as a matter of urgency and prior to 24 March 2021.

The Trust remains grateful for the opportunity to use the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020.

Yours faithfully,



Andrew Carvell
Project Manager
For Te Tai Tokerau Water Trust