



MFE BRF-2854

DOC 22-B-0122

Mark Wheeler  
Chief Executive  
Marlborough District Council  
s 9(2)(a)

Dear Mark Wheeler

**COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 – comments sought on referral application – Reimagining Aquaculture – Trials of Novel Aquaculture Structures Project**

The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited has applied to refer the Reimagining Aquaculture – Trials of Novel Aquaculture Structures Project (project) to an expert consenting panel (a panel) for consideration under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (FTCA). This letter is sent to you pursuant to section 21(2) of the FTCA.

The project is described in Appendix A and the application documents are in Attachment 1. As the project is fully within the Coastal Marine Area (CMA), the Minister of Conservation (Hon Willow-Jean Prime) and I will jointly decide on the application.

Minister Prime and I invite Marlborough District Council to provide written comments on the referral application. A template is provided for this purpose in Attachment 2. Comment is sought on the specific matters outlined in the table below, and on any other matter you consider relevant to our decision on whether or not to accept the application.

| Specific questions on the application                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Are there any reasons that you consider it more appropriate for the project, or part of the project, to proceed through existing Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) consenting processes rather than the processes in the FTCA? |
| 2. Does the applicant, or a company owned by the applicant, have any environmental regulatory compliance history in your district?                                                                                                 |



The above information is provided to you in confidence and as part of the statutory process set out in the FTCA. Please do not forward the application or the request for comments to anyone outside your organisation.

If we decide to accept the application and the project is referred to a panel, the council will have the opportunity to nominate a local authority representative (who could be a councillor or independent hearings commissioner) to sit on the panel and determine the RMA approvals needed for the project. The applicant will provide a detailed assessment of environmental effects and cultural impact assessments at this stage and the council will have the opportunity to provide further comments to the panel.

Please provide comments via return email within 10 working days if you wish us to take them into consideration when making our decision.

If you wish to discuss this application, please contact the Ministry for the Environment's Fast-track Consenting Team at [fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:fasttrackconsenting@mfe.govt.nz) to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'DP', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Hon David Parker  
**Minister for the Environment**

Appendix:

- A. Details of proposed project

Attachments:

1. Application to refer the Reimagining Aquaculture – Trials of Novel Aquaculture Structures Project to an expert consenting panel, including supporting information (Databox link in covering email)
2. Response template for written comments

## Appendix A - Proposed project

| Project                                                          | Applicant                                                     | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reimagining Aquaculture – Trials of Novel Aquaculture Structures | The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited | <p>The project is to install aquaculture structures and conduct trials involving fish in Tasman Bay approximately 6 kilometres to the west of Sauvage Point, D'Urville Island covering an area of approximately 3.6 hectares, located within the boundary of a consented 450-hectare marine farm. The project will occur wholly in the coastal marine area (CMA).</p> <p>The trials have four phases. Phase 1, involving physical trials of fish enclosures only (i.e., without live fish) is consented and underway in different locations within the coastal waters of Nelson City. This project involves Phases 2 to 4 that will test the physical suitability of the enclosures in an exposed environment with fish present.</p> |

