

11 November 2022

HUD2022-001073

s 9(2)(a)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 25 October 2022 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), information about Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) plans for the land around Mount Crawford in Wellington.

I have responded to each of your questions below.

1. *Have any cabinet papers or briefings gone to your minister on this subject and, if so, what are their titles and dates? Please provide copies.*

HUD has not provided any Cabinet papers or briefings to Ministers focused on Mount Crawford. As such, this part of your request is being refused under section 18(e), as the information does not exist.

2. *Is it correct that HUD is in negotiation with a property developer about developing a large number (we heard over 300) houses there?*

HUD has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Taranaki Whānui, as a Crown Treaty partner, to explore the housing potential of the site. HUD and Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) are currently in negotiations with Taranaki Whānui regarding a conditional transfer agreement. As such, this part of your request is being refused under section 9(2)(j), to enable a public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

3. *If so, is the developer Ian Cassels and the Wellington company (incl via his agent Egmont Dixon)?*

HUD is not aware of a development entity having been formed. However, HUD is aware that our Treaty partner, Taranaki Whānui, have previously worked with The Wellington Company.

4. *What is the timetable for decisions on this development?*

A high-level project workflow is provided in Annex 1, which shows the activities to be undertaken to enable the relevant upcoming decisions. The detailed due diligence evaluation work began in 2020, however, it has continued at a slower pace than was originally programmed, due to the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

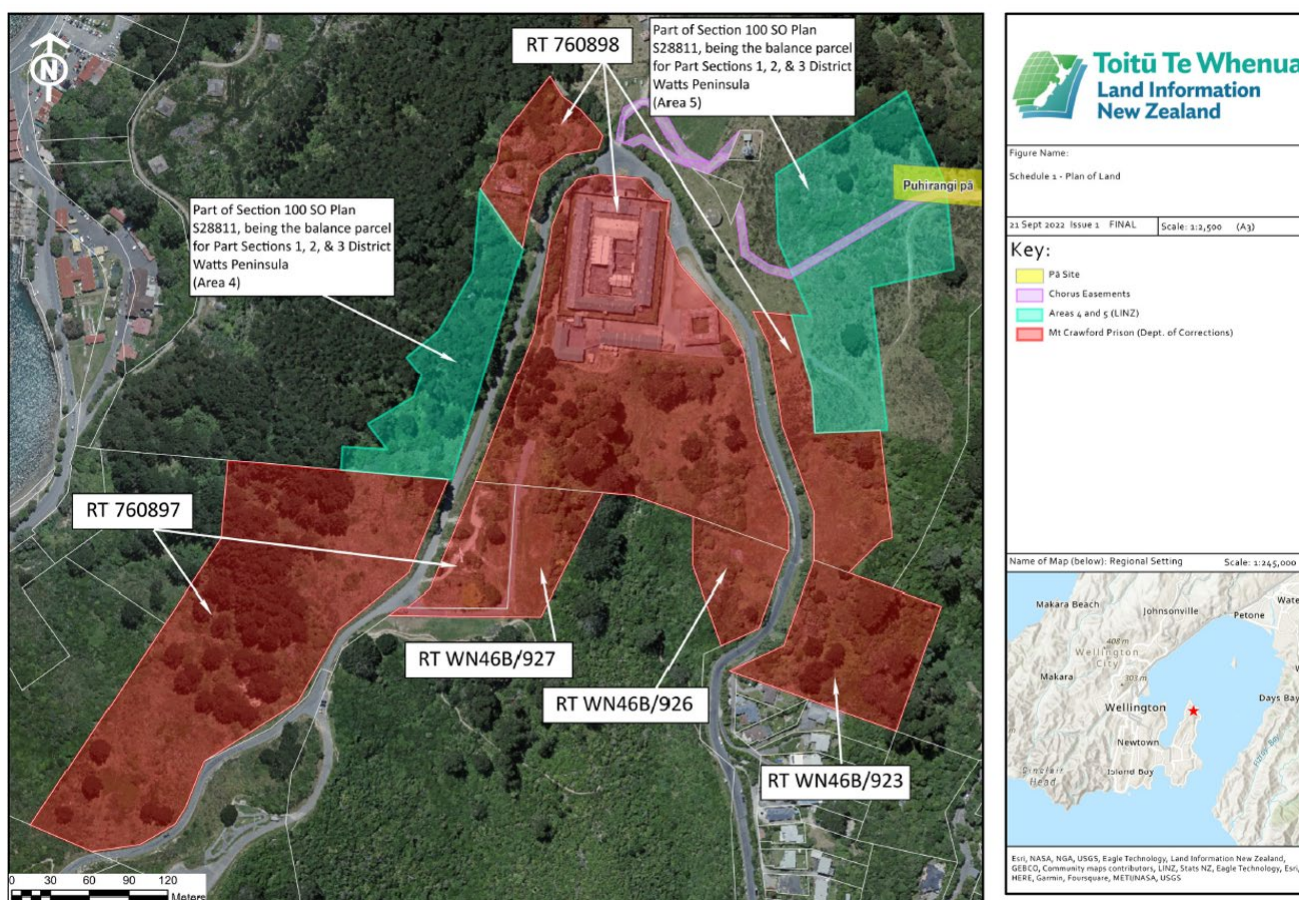
5. *Is it correct that you intend to use special fast-track powers for this development?*

If the site is considered suitable for housing, it will require the appropriate consents to enable development for such a purpose.

If the site is considered suitable for the purpose of state housing, the eventual development entity will be responsible for any consenting requirements.

6. *Please provide a map showing the land that would be developed.*

Please find a map below of the parcels of land that are in disposal referred as the Mount Crawford site.



7. *Is it correct that you intend to make decisions and take actions before Christmas? If yes, what decisions and what actions?*

HUD and LINZ are negotiating the potential transfer of administrative responsibilities. This may require internal agency decisions before Christmas. No other decisions are planned before Christmas.

8. *Why has HUD not engaged at all with the public and interested parties (including our member businesses) on this planned development?*

The Wellington City Council undertook a public consultation process from July to September 2022, as part of a District Plan review, to determine the long-term planning needs for the whole Miramar Peninsula.

HUD's role in the development is to consider the site's (land in disposal) suitability for housing. HUD is currently still determining if the site has housing potential.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the decision to withhold information under section 9 of the Act 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 of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'MF', with a stylized flourish above it.

Matt Fraser
Head of Land Acquisition and Development

Annex 1: Proposed project workflow

