

23 January 2012

Westland District Council
Private Bag 704
HOKITIKA 7842
Attention: Martin Kennedy

and

West Coast Regional Council
PO Box 66
Greymouth
Attention: Rachel Clark



Dear Rachel and Martin,

KANIERE FORKS AND McKAYS CREEK HEPS RECONSENTING APPLICATION

Further to your request for further information dated 19 September 2011, please find attached a revised copy of TrustPower's January 16th response.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 021 796 670

Yours faithfully

PLANIT R W BATTY & ASSOCIATES LTD

Matt Bonis

ASSOCIATE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matt Bonis", is positioned below the printed name and title.

Our ref.: 12 668

West Coast Regional Council Further Information Request (RMA – s.92)

Matter	Reason	Information Required	TrustPower's Response
<p>5. Natural features / landscapes</p>	<p>Although the lake is not identified as an outstanding natural feature/landscape in the Proposed Regional Land or Riverbed Management Plan or the Proposed Land and Water Plan there are criteria for assessment in the West Coast Regional Policy Statement.</p>	<p>a) An assessment of the lake in its current state compared with its altered state (lower lake levels) with respect to the criteria specified in Policy 9.1 of the West Coast Regional Policy Statement.</p>	<p>a) Ms Buckland has provided a detailed assessment of the current and proposed lake levels in accordance with the criteria provided in Policy 9.1 of the West Coast Regional Policy Statement.</p> <p>With regard to the proposed fluctuations in the lake water level, it is noted that the Scheme has been designed so that effects on the landscape and visual amenity are reduced over the summer months when use of the lake is highest. From a landscape and natural amenity perspective, Ms Buckland notes that a lower lake level for longer periods of time means that the lake becomes a less prominent feature in the view. However, she states that the proposed regime will have very little effect on the intrinsic values of the lake because the lake levels fluctuate considerably already.</p> <p>In terms of representativeness, it is considered that Lake Kaniere is a representative example of the lakes in South Westland. Ms Buckland states that although the lake has been modified through its long history of hydro and municipal water takes, the proposed lake level regime will not alter or detract from the character of the lake.</p> <p>With regard to the potential effects of the Scheme on the surrounding significant indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna, Ms Buckland states that the fluctuations in lake levels, including increased periods of lower lake levels will not materially alter the lake's current association with the surrounding indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Ms Buckland notes that prolonged very low lake levels will have an adverse effect on the visual and amenity of the lake's margins. However, she considers that the proposed seasonal constraint conditions will ensure that these adverse effects are acceptable when compared with the existing environment.</p> <p>It is noted that Lake Kaniere and surrounding environment are</p>

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			<p>of value to Tangata Whenua, as it is linked to the pounamu history of the area and provided access between Hokitika and Arahura Rivers and between the east and west coast. As Ms Buckland notes none of the local iwi have submitted on the application.</p> <p>Overall, Ms Buckland states that the adverse effects of the proposed lower lake levels on the margins of the lake will only occur for a maximum of 15 days in summer and 42 days in winter, and states that this is acceptable from a landscape and natural amenity perspective. Refer Attachment A.</p>

Westland District Council Further Information Request (RMA – s.92)

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1. Landscape / Natural Character / Amenity	To fully understand the potential effects of works required from the intake at Lake Kaniere to the outlet of the McKays tailrace.	<p>a) Confirm the assessed landscape status of the project area in terms of the application and the provisions of the Westland District Plan.</p> <p>b) Details of works required, and assessment of landscape effects, at the intake/tunnel section of the Kaniere Forks Scheme to chainage 000m. Plans provide some detail from chainage</p>	<p>a) Ms Buckland has provided an assessment of the proposal against the policy framework. The assessment notes that Lake Kaniere does not fit within the guidelines for determining examples of outstanding landscapes and features provided in section 3.10 of the Westland District Plan and therefore considers that the proposed development will not impinge on the integrity of landscapes in the District. Further, it is considered that the proposed changes will maintain the scenic, open and diverse character of Westland. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal is consistent with Objectives 3.10.1 and 3.10.2.</p> <p>With regard to Objective 3.10.3, Ms Buckland considers that the removal of high quality rimu forest for the construction of the new race to the transmission lines will initially have high landscape and natural character effects, however notes that the proposed re-vegetation of this area and the amenity areas will assist in mitigating these effects. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>b) Details of the proposed works required at the intake / tunnel section of the Kaniere Forks Scheme to chainage 000m were provided in TrustPower Limited's further information response dated 18 October 2011.</p>

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		<p>000m onward but not in the area before chainage 000m through the 10m construction corridor. Also provide typical cross sections for this area particularly where it enters the reserve and walkway.</p> <p>d) Detail existing vegetation and amenities removed, and earthworks required including assessment of landscape effects of all works between the intake/landing and chainage 500m and provide details, timing and plans of the proposed landscape/amenities rehabilitation and mitigation for this area.</p> <p>g) The suggested landscape rehabilitation plan conditions propose successful rehabilitation will be achieved at a coverage of 40% gorse and 10% bare ground. Is this proposed to apply between the intake and chainage 500m and will this achieve mitigation of landscape effects through that area.</p>	<p>With regard to the landscape effects, Ms Buckland notes that the construction corridor for the new culvert and walkway and cycle track will result in the removal of existing vegetation. The visual and landscape and natural character effects of this vegetation removal will initially be high, however it is noted that the proposed conditions of consent seek to re-vegetate the transmission line and provide an amenity picnic area at The Landing to help mitigate these effects. The report states that as the planting matures over the next 8-10 years the effects of the vegetation removal will reduce. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>Photomontages of the proposed changes are provided in Attachment B.</p> <p>d) Details of the proposed vegetation and earthworks were provided in TrustPower Limited's further information response dated 18 October 2011.</p> <p>Ms Buckland notes that the proposal will result in the clearance of vegetation for the construction of the water race, resulting in a corridor of 15m wide, with a reduced corridor of 10m for the first 70m. The proposed Scheme will result in changes to the existing landform and landscape character that will be highly visible initially. However it is considered that the proposed revegetation planting and amenity area will help to mitigate these effects. If full revegetation of this section is achieved, then the natural character of the area could be restored after about 10 years. Overall, Ms Buckland has stated that following the proposed mitigation, the landscape effects in this section will be moderate to minor. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>g) The landscape rehabilitation plan does apply to the area between the intake and chainage 500m. Ms Buckland states that the 40% cover of gorse is proposed as a nursing stock for the indigenous vegetation. This mixture of gorse and indigenous species will quickly form a ground cover of vegetation. Over time the indigenous vegetation will grow up to dominate the gorse and will be the dominant vegetation. Refer Attachment A.</p>

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		<p>h) It is proposed over the whole construction site that, post construction, 40% may be left as gorse, with 10% being left as bare ground. Is the conclusion of the assessment effects that this mitigates landscape/character effects of the works particularly along the cycle/walkway. Provide details and plans of the proposed landscaping/revegetation works following construction.</p> <p>k) The Kaniere Forks scheme proposes to penstock options from Ward Road to the new power station. Provide an assessment of the landscape effects of each of the two options and whether there is a preferred option.</p> <p>l) The McKays Scheme provides different options prior to the buffer pond and new penstocks. Provide an assessment of the landscape effects of each of the two options and whether these are a preferred option.</p>	<p>h) Details regarding the rehabilitation of the land were provided in TrustPower Limited's further information response dated 18 October 2011.</p> <p>Ms Buckland states that the 40% cover of gorse is proposed as a nursing stock for the indigenous vegetation. This mixture of gorse and indigenous species will quickly form a ground cover of vegetation. Over time the indigenous vegetation will grow up to dominate the gorse and will be the dominant vegetation. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>Please note: a copy of the draft Landscape Rehabilitation Plan was provided with TrustPower Ltd.'s response dated 19th December.</p> <p>k) Ms Buckland notes that Option 1 runs parallel to Wards Road and would be visible from the road, west of Ward Road bridge for 160m, and would result in the clearance of vegetation alongside the road.</p> <p>Option 2 would involve the widening of the Kaniere Race to a 15m wide corridor and the removal of vegetation from both sides of the race. The penstocks for Option 2 would be shorter and located on the slope of the river bank.</p> <p>Ms Buckland states that the penstocks for Option 2 would be less visible from Ward Road and is therefore the preferred option from a landscape and visual effects perspective. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>l) Option 1 seeks to refurbish the tunnel for the McKays Scheme to provide capacity for the increased flow proposed. There will be no landscape or natural character effects resulting from this option in the long term.</p> <p>Option 2 seeks to install an 850m long canal to by-pass the tunnel, requiring an estimated 550,000 cubic metres of earthworks during the construction period. The excavated</p>

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		<p>m) The McKays Scheme proposes two new above ground penstocks between the new headpond and the enhanced station. Provide an assessment of the effects and proposed mitigation.</p>	<p>material will be placed in low lying paddocks in the adjacent Kaniere Farms and will be used to back fill the existing race.</p> <p>Option 2 will result in greater visual and landscape effects resulting from the earthworks and the removal of existing good quality vegetation. As a result, Ms Buckland states that whilst the tunnel would be preferable from a landscape and natural character perspective, either outcome would be acceptable in conjunction with the implementation of the Landscape Rehabilitation Plan. Refer Attachment A.</p> <p>m) The existing penstocks for the McKays Scheme are located below ground. As a result of their installation, the landform and vegetation cover has been altered previously. The existing power station is located on a river terrace on the south west side of the Kaniere River, against a rock bank. The site is not readily visible from Lake Kaniere Road or other public areas.</p> <p>The proposal seeks to install one replacement penstock initially, and provision will be made for an additional penstock in the new location so that it can be installed when the existing penstock reaches the end of its design life.</p> <p>In accordance with the proposed conditions of consent and the Landscape Rehabilitation Plan, the exposed slopes around the penstocks will be revegetated with low growing ground cover plants. Ms Buckland considers that the extension to the power station and installation of the penstocks will have minor effects on natural character once the revegetation has matured, largely as a result of the site having been significantly modified previously and that it is not readily viewed or accessed by the public. Refer Attachment A.</p>