

Memorandum

To: Ministry for the Environment

From: Mitchell Daysh

Date: 9 April 2025

Re: Taheke 8C Hydroelectric Scheme – Effects overview to support application to be referred to the fast-track approvals process.

1. PURPOSE

This memorandum has been prepared to support the Referral Application of Taheke 8C Ltd (“**T8CL**”) for the Taheke 8C Hydroelectric Scheme (“**Scheme**”) to the Minister for Infrastructure under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024.

It identifies the significant environmental issues associated with the Scheme and describes how these are to be managed. It also provides a description of the anticipated and known adverse effects of the Scheme on the environment¹, as well as the potential positive effects of the Scheme, that are also considered relevant, especially to the regional and national benefits of the Scheme².

2. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Interest in the Ōkere/Kaituna River as a potential site for hydroelectric generation stretches back decades:

- > In the 1960s and 70s, government and regional authorities considered the upper Ōkere/Kaituna River catchment for hydro development recognising its elevation drop, reliable flow, and proximity to transmission infrastructure.
- > While initial proposals did not proceed due to changing national energy strategies, they laid the groundwork for future opportunities to be considered more holistically.

¹ s13(4)(h) Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

² s22(1)(a) Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

- > For many years, Taheke 8C has advocated for a more inclusive, sustainable approach to development that would recognise the river's cultural significance and ecological importance.

In 2024, the Proprietors of Taheke 8C & Adjoining Blocks Incorporation (“**Incorporation**”), as the kaitiaki and landowner of key parts of the river catchment, instructed T8CL to actively revisit the potential for small-scale hydro development on their land.

Working with technical experts and environmental and cultural advisors, T8CL initiated detailed feasibility studies to determine how a hydro scheme could be developed in a way that:

- > Protected the mauri of the river.
- > Delivered economic benefits to shareholders.
- > Supported New Zealand's renewable energy and emissions goals.
- > Provided enduring environmental enhancements.

This led to the advancement of a scheme that aligns with Taheke 8C values, modern environmental standards and national energy policy.

T8CL recognises that there will be effects caused by the Scheme that it will not be able to completely avoid, remedy or mitigate through the project design. These remaining adverse effects will be offset by a variety of environmental and community projects and initiatives.

In saying that, T8CL recognises that the current state of the Ōkere/Kaituna River and its environs are not pristine, or even optimal after years of farming and forestry undertaken alongside, the invasion of pest plants and animals, and given the nutrients and other impacts from urbanisation around the river and the two lakes which flow into it.

Therefore, by designing the Scheme, T8CL has not only sought to mitigate and offset effects, but it has also sought to positively enhance the river and environs of the land that are within its purview. Acknowledging the need to reflect its values practically and therefore seek to improve the quality and mauri of the river for future Taheke whanau, the local community and the region, T8CL has also identified three enhancement projects as an integral part of the Scheme. Each will be a key part of returning the river, its flora and fauna and the land back to a positive state. The Scheme and these projects also have the potential to provide significant positive economic benefits to the local, regional and national economies.

APPENDIX ONE – BIOGRAPHIES

Personnel	Topic	Bio
s 9(2)(a) Technical Director, Damwatch Engineering	Hydropower specialist	s 9(2)(a) a civil and dams engineer specialising in the field of planning and engineering of hydraulic structures in hydropower projects. s 9(2)(a) of engineering experience, s 9(2) of which have been dedicated to hydropower projects both in New Zealand and internationally, particularly in Southeast Asia.
s 9(2)(a) Technical Director, Hydrology & Hydraulics, Tonkin & Taylor	Hydrology	s 9(2)(a) experience undertaking hydrological and hydraulic investigations and engineering design for a wide range of water resource projects in New Zealand and overseas, including hydro-electric power schemes, irrigation dams and floodplain management.
s 9(2)(a) Technical Director, Hydrology and Geomorphology, SLR Consulting	Geomorphology	s 9(2)(a) ' experience investigating and modelling geomorphic and hydrological systems; including fluvial processes, erosion, and sedimentation. He has expertise in the spatial and temporal variability of a wide range of environmental processes and their interaction with human activity.
s 9(2)(a) Managing Director, EcoLogical Solutions	Aquatic ecology	s 9(2)(a) ecology consulting experience and has been part of or led project teams consenting small, medium and large-scale projects throughout New Zealand, including numerous energy projects.
s 9(2)(a) Director, EcoLogical Solutions	Terrestrial ecology	s 9(2)(a) terrestrial ecology consulting experience throughout New Zealand and has an in-depth knowledge of New Zealand's flora and fauna. During his career he has covered a range of ecological subjects from assessments of effects for energy development projects and the development and implementation of consent conditions to preparation of restoration plans, management plans and peer review.



Personnel	Topic	Bio
s 9(2)(a) Jowett Consulting	Instream habitat assessment	s has extensive experience and expertise assessing the effects of water takes on flow regimes and assessing the environmental flow requirements for rivers throughout New Zealand using the Instream Flow Incremental Methodology (IFIM) and a range of other assessment approaches.
s 9(2)(a) Director, Property Economics	Economic benefits	s 9(2)(a) experience undertaking property market research and analytics for major commercial and government clients. Areas of specialisation include profiling economic and social demographics, industrial market analysis, market demand / supply assessments, capacity modelling, development feasibility assessments, and cost-benefit analysis.
s 9(2)(a) Managing Partner, Wayfinder	Landscape and visual	s 9(2) has worked on a wide variety of environmental projects throughout New Zealand. He specialises in evaluating landscape and visual effects and providing strategic development advice across interdisciplinary team.
s 9(2)(a) Sage Planning	Recreation	s 9(2)(a) ' experience in both local government and consultancy, Debra has experience as a Landscape Architect and in providing recreational assessments. She is experienced in planning and managing for public, community and commercial facilities and services in parks and reserves, and in urban and protected areas.
s 9(2)(a) Greenaway and Associates	Recreation (Peer Review)	s 9(2)(a) experience in consultancy, s 9(2)(a) has provided over 300 recreational assessments for private companies, local and central government, and environmental and community agencies.
s 9(2)(a) Director, CKL	Transportation	s 9(2)(a) ' experience with a strong technical background and significant expertise preparing Integrated Transportation Assessments, travel plans and feasibility studies for developments as well as developing transport masterplans.



Personnel	Topic	Bio
s 9(2)(a) Director, Environmental Aquaculture	Cultural values	s 9(2)(a) has experience in preparing cultural impact assessments and brings a focus on developing ecological enhancement and restoration opportunities that recognise and provide for matauranga Māori and mahinga kai values.
s 9(2)(a) Director, Clough & Assoc	Archaeology	s 9(2)(a) is a New Zealand trained archaeologist with experience in Australia, the UK, and extensive consulting experience in New Zealand, including assessment, investigation and project management.
s 9(2)(a) Partner, Mitchell Daysh	Planning	s 9(2)(a) environmental consulting and management experience in New Zealand, Asia, and the Pacific. He has considerable experience in all fields of environmental planning, and in the management and co-ordination of multidisciplinary professional service teams for major projects. His primary specialty is the project management of feasibility studies, environmental investigations and permitting processes for energy and infrastructure facilities and urban developments.



