

## COVER SHEET

1. Waitaki District Council Geopark Business Case PGF Application		For: Approve
<b>Background &amp; context:</b>		<b>Recommendation:</b>
<p><b>Applicant Organisation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Waitaki District Council</li> </ul> <p><b>Location:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oamaru – (Waitaki District sits within both Canterbury and Otago regions)</li> </ul> <p><b>Proposal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding to engage an external consultant to prepare the business case to obtain the UNESCO Geopark status for the Waitaki Whitestone area (WWG).</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding Sought:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total project value: \$ <small>Commercial Information</small></li> <li>PGF Funding: \$90,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Background:</b> Waitaki District Council (WDC) is acting as the lead facilitator in a project to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark status for the Waitaki Whitestone Geopark (the WWG) in the Waitaki District, Otago. Currently, there is no other UNESCO Global Geopark in Australasia. In May 2018, after receiving Expressions of Interest from around New Zealand, the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO nominated the WWG to UNESCO as being the only Geopark application worthy of forwarding to the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris.</p>		<p><b>We recommend that the SROs:</b></p> <p><b>(a) Note</b> That before PGF funding is committed, the applicant secures clarification from UNESCO, that Geopark status will not inhibit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waitaki District's future development as a working landscape;</li> <li>The development and deployment of water storage; and</li> <li>The display and/or trade in natural materials extracted within the District e.g. as per the same request made by the aspiring <b>Commercial Information</b></li> </ul> <p><b>(b) Approve</b> funding of up to <b>Commercial Information</b> this does not commit the PGF to further funding</p>
<b>PGF criteria that this proposal supports:</b>		
<b>PGF Criteria</b>	<b>Assessment Commentary</b>	<b>Rating (1✓ to 5✓)</b>
<b>Link with fund and government outcomes</b>		
Creates permanent jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application seeks money to validate the</li> </ul>	✓

	<p>commercial/business case for WWG. As such there is no jobs data available now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conversely, the business case, if funded, would need to assess the effect upon permanent jobs if UNESCO rules were implemented.</li> </ul>	
Delivers benefit to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application seeks money to validate the commercial/business case for the WWG. As such there is no data to validate the tourism value proposition between a Geo-trail and a Geopark.</li> </ul>	✓✓✓
Increased utilisation and returns of Maori asset base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant has had exploratory discussions with Ngai Tahu and Te Runanga O Moeraki leading to its aspiring geopark status. What this means for the business case is yet to be determined.</li> </ul>	✓✓✓
Enhanced sustainability of natural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable development through geotourism is a core objective of UNESCO Geoparks. This is to inform public consciousness of non-living resources, like landforms.</li> </ul>	✓✓✓✓
Mitigation of climate change effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geoparks in themselves will not mitigate climate change given Geotourism (from overseas) may in fact increase visitor numbers.</li> </ul>	✓✓
<b>Additionality</b>		
Adding value by building on what is already there	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application, if accepted, will be unique in Australasia. It will create a niche destination for geotourism leveraging off rail trails and walks, subject to clarity over UNESCO rules affecting local businesses and events.</li> </ul>	✓✓✓✓✓
Acts as a catalyst for productivity potential in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a catalyst for geotourism and ecotourism potentially, if the commercial case is validated (and clarity n rule effects realised).</li> </ul>	✓✓✓✓✓
<b>Connected to regional stakeholders and frameworks</b>		
Alignment with regional priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application accords with Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy and the investment statement for Tourism in the PGF to add high value tourism and to spread demand beyond the high season and into more regions. In this case, North Otago/ South Canterbury. Geoparks enhance outcomes for ecosystems and biodiversity by protecting the landforms they need.</li> </ul>	✓✓✓✓✓
Support from local governance groups (inc. Councils, Iwi/Hapu)	The Expression of Interest was lodged with the support of:	✓✓✓✓✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waitaki District Council</li> <li>• Environment Canterbury</li> <li>• Ngai Tahu</li> <li>• Tourism New Zealand</li> <li>• Department of Conservation</li> <li>• University of Otago</li> <li>• North Otago Museum</li> <li>• Otago Museum</li> <li>• Tourism Waitaki</li> <li>• Waitaki Tourism Association.</li> </ul>								
<b>Governance, risk management and project execution</b>									
Robust project management and governance systems	Waitaki District Council is the lead agency so project and governance skills are rated as high	✓✓✓✓✓							
Risk management approach	This funding is part of validating the business/commercial case and is a sensible next step, subject to clarifying how UNESCO rules may impact future land use and access to non-commercial minerals and materials from within the park.	✓✓✓✓✓							
Future ownership / operational management	Co-management plan to be drafted but as the Geopark is covered by District as well as Regional Plans, the RMA and ultimately, UNESCO.	✓✓✓✓✓							
<b>The purpose of this briefing is to consider recommending/ declining PGF funds to the:</b>									
<b>Risks Issues:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is risk that a district-wide Geopark could morph in policy and become restrictive upon legal activities. Further information should be obtained from the applicant on this point.</li> <li>• Ongoing cost and potential requirement for rate payer funding</li> <li>• Tourism benefits not pronounced</li> </ul> <b>Eligibility points of note:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Due diligence</i>:- Full due diligence is not required as the applicants is a local authority.</li> <li>• <i>Conflict(s) of interest</i>:- Based on the information provided no conflict of interest is evident noting that full due diligence will inform this item further.</li> <li>• <i>Illegal Activity</i>:- Based on the application information provided and feedback from other agencies there is no indication that the applicant or project has been involved in, or associated with illegal activity.</li> <li>• <i>Alignment with Regional development plans</i>:-</li> <li>• <i>Commercial funding availability</i>:- Given the nature of the project which is to access to commercial funding is not considered a feasible option.</li> </ul>									
<b>Consultation undertaken or implications:</b>									
<b>Legal</b>	N/A	<b>HR</b>	N/A	<b>Finance</b>	N/A	<b>MBIE policy</b>	N/A	<b>Other</b>	

<b>Supporting proposal:</b>	Yes
<b>Appendices:</b>	Yes - Applications and supporting letters are as annexes
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Manager/Author of paper:</b>	Privacy of natural persons / Matt Chisnall. Investment Team

PROACTIVELY RELEASED