

25 March 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Request for Official Information responded to under the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) – reference: 8100659 (OIR: 2021-203)

I refer to your information request and the following questions we received on 9 March 2021:

I note that Council is trialling the use of Flock Off to control Canada Geese at Awatea Lake.

- 1. I take it this option was recommended by the pest control company contracted to provide advice? (Rob Cross 14 Jan)***
- 2. I am interested to know what other control options were put forward by the company and considered by Council.***
- 3. Could you please provide a copy of the information provided to Council - for information provided to Council about options for managing/controlling Canada Geese in the Kapiti region.***

Council response

The trial use of Flock Off to control the Canadian Geese at Awatea Lakes was an option recommended by Council officers, (not any pest control contractor) after officers completed significant research into population control options. This option was selected after considering animal welfare, public distress caused by culling, and community health and welfare.

Other control options included a cull proposal.

The advice received by Council from an external pest contractor is attached. However, as part of the information you have requested is commercially sensitive, on that basis I must withhold this information under section 7(2)(b)(ii) of the Act which allows for Council to withhold information in order to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

In the Council's view the reasons for withholding these details are not outweighed by public interest considerations in section 7(1) favouring their release.

You have the right to request the Ombudsman to review this decision. Complaints can be sent by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz, by fax to (04) 471 2254, or by post to The Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi



Sacha Haskell

Group Manager, Place and Space
Te Kaihautū Takiwā, Waahi hoki

Kapiti Rabbit & Pest Control

Otaki Gorge Road

OTAKI

16 February 2021

Mr Robert Crosse
KCDC Programme Manager Biodiversity
Kapiti Coast District Council
PARAPARAUMU

Dear Rob,

RE Canada Goose Control Plan & Quote re Otaraau Park

Further to recent conversations regarding this issue, I undertook a site visit at Otaraau Park on Friday 12 February 2021, to undertake an evaluation of the site, the pest issues, and to devise a safe and effective culling proposal.

My background and experience: As discussed, I am based in Otaki and do the vast majority of my control work is on the Kapiti Coast, predominantly on farms and lifestyle blocks, relatively close to neighbouring properties, so I am aware of the area and the need for safety. I have 40+ years of firearms experience, including being a police officer for 9 years. I am an effective, humane, safe and reliable shooter. (For further information, check out my website at <http://www.kapitirabbitcontrol.co.nz/>).

Below is a plan that:

- Provides a Canada goose control plan within the project area;
- Addresses Health & Safety issues;
- Provides advice on implementation timeline;
- Advises potential results;
- Includes a cost estimate.

The site: Insofar as the site goes, it consists of relatively flat farm land with recently cut hay paddocks, along with pockets of scrub and trees; and the soccer fields. There appears to be a resident population of Canada geese (I counted 210), plus a large number of Pukekos and a heavy rabbit infestation.

The topography of the site is excellent for shooting in that the target geese are visible and there is cover to enable me to shoot from a distance and not be noticed by them, and therefore hopefully they will stay in place. I did note that they would fly a short distance if approached closely by my hunting dog, but appeared to be well settled and not unduly disturbed by human presence. I got within 30 yards of the first flock and they just started at me without flying off.

Shooting plan – Health & Safety Considerations

I intend to use a specialist .204 Ruger rifle in the control work – a powerful and accurate long range rifle. I envisage going in at dawn and a shoot would probably take three hours.

I would approach the block from the sheds by the gates in my 4WD vehicle; park up in a secluded spot away from the geese (up to approximately 150-175 yards from the geese). I will be using a rifle with a suppressor attached which dulls the report and also makes it difficult for animals to determine the direction the shot originated from.

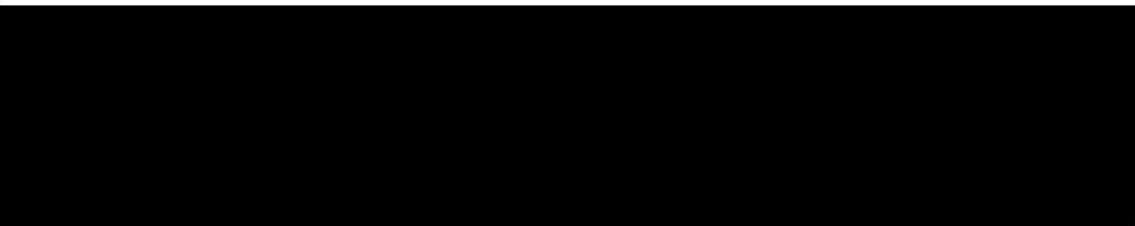
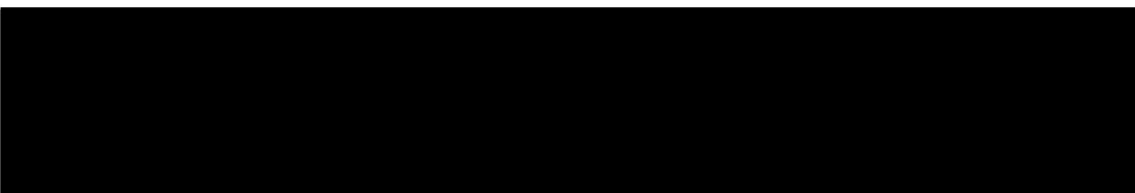
I intend to shoot from a hatch in the roof of my vehicle thereby shooting on a downwards angle so that in the event of a miss, the bullet will strike the ground (rather than carry on if fired from a prone position). As I will be shooting from an angle, into sandy terrain, there is effectively zero chance of ricochets. The bullet I will be using is very light and travelling at very high speeds which renders it highly accurate, effective and safe.

I am highly mindful of the surrounding houses and suggest some form of communication be made by KCDC letting Waikanae police and homeowners / landowners neighbouring or overlooking the park know of the impending cull – time, date and place.

Potential Results

Given the geese are used to people being around and to sudden noise (eg the trains rumbling past), and that I intend to snipe them from cover at a distance, I believe that an excellent result should be attainable after one shoot.

There are a number of variables however, so I suggest that I undertake the shoot and then I report back to you with results afterwards, and we discuss whether any follow up is required.



Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance re this project.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Mitchell'.

Phil Mitchell
Director

Kapiti Rabbit & Pest Control