

21 September 2026

File Ref: 26-0005

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Official information request

We refer to your official information request dated 22 August and received by Selwyn Water on 24 August 2026.

The information you have requested is as follows:

1. The current approved budget, and latest forecast total cost, for the Hororātā/Hartleys integration project.

Project Spend pre-26/27 (SDC)	Budget 26/27	Total Project Forecast
\$6,514,305.41	\$9,500,000.00	\$15,702,480.46

2. The principal remaining project stages and their expected completion dates.

Stage*	Completion date
Hartleys Water Treatment Plant Upgrades	December 2026
Coalgate Reservoir and Pumpstation	February 2027
Pipeline - Stage 1 (Hartleys to Glentunnel)	Completed July 2026 – other works requiring completion to commission
Pipeline - Stage 2 (Glentunnel to Coalgate)	February 2027
Pipeline - Stage 3 (Coalgate to Hororata) – plus Aitken's booster pumpstation, pipeline to Aitken's reservoir and Aitken's reservoir upgrades.	January 2027
Whitecliff's Pumpstation	Completed June 2025 – other works requiring completion to commission
Glentunnel Pumpstation (conversion from existing Hororata WTP)	April 2027
Combined commissioning works	June 2027

*See included project map



3. The date by which water from the improved Hartleys source is expected to be available to Hororātā consumers.

Following completion and commissioning of Hartleys WTP upgrades, pipeline stages 1, 2, and 3 (including works to Aitken's reservoir) and Coalgate Reservoir and Pump Station, Hororātā will be supplied by the Hartleys water source. This is currently programmed to be completed before the end of June 2027.

4. The current expected date for completion of the overall project

Completion and commissioning of all stages of the joining of the schemes is expected to be by end of June 2027.

5. What measurable improvement residents should expect following completion, particularly regarding the frequency of boil-water and conserve-water notices.

The Hororātā water supply source is located directly adjacent to the Selwyn River and is highly susceptible to elevated turbidity and reduced ultraviolet transmittance (UVT) during rainfall events. When source water quality deteriorates beyond the water treatment plant's operating limits, the plant may need to be taken offline, resulting in the issuing of conserve water notices. If the treatment plant cannot be returned to service within three days, and it is restarted before source water quality has improved sufficiently to consistently meet compliance requirements, a boil water notice may also be required.

The proposed network upgrades will improve the resilience of the water supply system by connecting Hororātā to the Hartleys water treatment plant. The Hartleys water treatment plant and source infrastructure is located at a great distance from the Selwyn River and is less affected by rainfall-related water quality deterioration. This will provide greater security of supply during adverse weather events and is expected to reduce the frequency and duration of consumer advisory notices.

While the frequency of future rainfall events cannot be predicted, historical performance provides a useful indication of scheme resilience. Since 1 January 2023, the Hororātā scheme has required 22 rainfall-related notices (20 conserve notices and two boil water notices), whereas the Hartleys scheme has required only three rainfall-related conserve notices and no boil water notices. This equates to an 86% reduction in rainfall-related notice events, demonstrating the significantly improved performance of the Hartleys scheme during wet weather conditions.

6. Whether there are any known funding, consenting, procurement or construction risks that could materially change the programme.

There is a construction risk around traffic management. Our network contractor CORDE are still coordinating with Selwyn District Council's network managers on traffic management of stage 3. There is a risk that stage 3 construction start is pushed out by the Council to avoid too much traffic management being in place in the area at one time. This would also delay the final completion and commissioning of the whole works.



7. Whether Council/Selwyn Water has made any specific service-level commitment for Hororātā once these works are completed.

Following completion of the current works, the new pipeline is expected to significantly reduce the frequency of rainfall-related notice events once commissioned.

Selwyn Water has also included further capital improvements for the Hororātā water supply scheme in its current forward programme for 2027/28. These include a second reservoir, upgrades to the pump building at Thwaites, and the decommissioning and removal of the Harper Hill reservoir. If progressed, these projects are expected to further improve the reliability and resilience of the water supply network.

Restrictor change question

A further issue has been raised with me by Hororātā residents concerning the reported \$700–\$800 charge to reduce their restricted water allocation and therefore their ongoing water charges.

My understanding is that, for a conventional restricted connection, reducing the flow principally involves changing the calibrated restrictor/orifice, together with the necessary isolation, checking, reinstatement, verification and administration.

Could you please confirm what physical work is actually undertaken when a Hororātā customer reduces their allocation, the typical contractor time involved, and provide a breakdown of how the current charge is calculated?

Selwyn Water response

The Hororātā scheme is fully restricted and fully allocated, with no capacity available for new connections. We have included useful information for customers on the potential impacts of reducing water units in restricted schemes. Customers should carefully consider any request to reduce their water units, as surrendered units may be reallocated to people currently waiting for availability. Due to ongoing demand on the scheme, it is unlikely those units could be reinstated at a later date.

Selwyn Water has kept the same charging methodology and price point that the Council charged for reducing water units. This is a total of \$705 consisting of:

- \$145 administration fee
- \$560 for the physical work required to make the change

Administration fee

This fee covers the time required for Selwyn Water's business support and accounts team to process the application, raise a service request with our network contractor CORDE, liaise with the customer, and generate the invoice, which must be paid before the change can be completed.

The administrative processes required before and after the physical works are completed include:



- Confirming the property's water allocation and entitlement
- Checking billing and account status
- Assessing scheme capacity implications
- Obtaining any necessary engineering approvals
- Raising and processing customer invoices
- Creating, scheduling and managing the work request with CORDE
- Liaising with the customer and tracking the request through to completion
- Updating Selwyn Water's asset management and property records

Once completed, the revised water allocation must be permanently recorded in Selwyn Water's asset management system and on the property record. This information is included in Land Information Memorandum (LIM) reports and forms part of the property's record for future owners.

Physical works

The physical works component covers CORDE's attendance to undertake the change to the property's restricted water supply. This typically involves locating and isolating the supply, installing a new restrictor unit to reflect the change in allocation, reinstating the connection, verifying the change, and updating contractor records. The charge includes contractor labour, travel, the cost of the new restrictor and associated administration required to plan, undertake and record the work. While the physical change itself may appear straightforward, the cost reflects the end-to-end service required to safely complete and document the change within the water supply network.

This charge is standardised across the district to ensure a fair and consistent charging approach for all customers. Costs can vary depending on factors such as travel time, site conditions and the work required, however individually calculating the cost of each request would create additional administrative complexity and cost. The standard charge is therefore based on the overall cost of providing the service across the district rather than the circumstances of any individual property.

Breakdown of the \$560 charge:

- Restrictor cost = \$140 (approx.)
- Travel time, labour and contractor planning and administration = \$420

Service level question

I would also like to suggest a practical alternative. There could be two service levels: an urgent individual call-out charged at the appropriate full cost, and a substantially cheaper non-urgent option. Customers choosing the latter could go onto a waiting list until, say, five or ten jobs in Hororātā or the surrounding area can be completed by the contractor in a single programmed visit. Travel and mobilisation costs could then be spread across several properties.



This seems particularly sensible because a household voluntarily surrendering unnecessary allocation is reducing demand on a constrained water scheme. The charging structure should encourage that where practical rather than create a substantial financial barrier.

Could Selwyn Water please advise whether such a scheduled service has been considered and, as an indicative exercise, what the approximate per-property cost would be if, say, ten non-urgent restrictor reductions in Hororātā were undertaken as one programmed maintenance run?

Selwyn Water response

Selwyn Water will be reviewing and consulting with the community on its Fees and Charges Schedule for 2027/28 as part of the development of the next Water Services Strategy. We are listening to community feedback and will take this feedback into account when considering any future changes relating to water unit allocations and associated charges.

We are willing to consider opportunities to reduce costs where multiple customers in the same area wish to undertake the same work at the same time. We have previously coordinated this approach where there was sufficient local demand to make a bulk change practical.

Requests to reduce water allocations are relatively uncommon and are not generally urgent in nature. Any urgent issues affecting a customer's water supply are treated as operational matters and would be investigated separately at no charge. Changing water unit allocations requires careful consideration of current and future water needs for the property, its occupants and future owners.

Should there be sufficient interest from property owners wishing to reduce their water units at the same time, we would be happy to consider whether a coordinated approach and a reduced charge may be feasible. However, the costs would need to be assessed based on the specific properties involved, their location and proximity to one another. In addition, only a portion of the total charge relates to travel, with contractor administration, customer liaison, record management, materials and the physical works themselves still required for each individual property. For this reason, we are unable to provide an estimate of any potential cost reduction at this stage.

It is also important to note that reducing water unit allocations in Hororātā does not necessarily create additional usable capacity within the scheme or reduce the costs of operating and maintaining the network. While a reduction may decrease the potential demand from an individual property, there are customers waiting for units to become available, and the infrastructure, treatment and operational requirements needed to provide the service remain largely unchanged.

As a guide, we recommend a minimum allocation of two water units for a typical household of four people. This allocation does not provide for irrigation or other higher water-use activities. Given the Hororātā scheme is fully allocated, we do not generally encourage customers to reduce their water unit allocation unless they are confident it will meet their long-term needs, as additional units may not be available in the future.

We continue to investigate longer-term options for the Hororātā water supply scheme and will continue to work with the community as future opportunities are considered.



You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published on our website with your personal information removed.

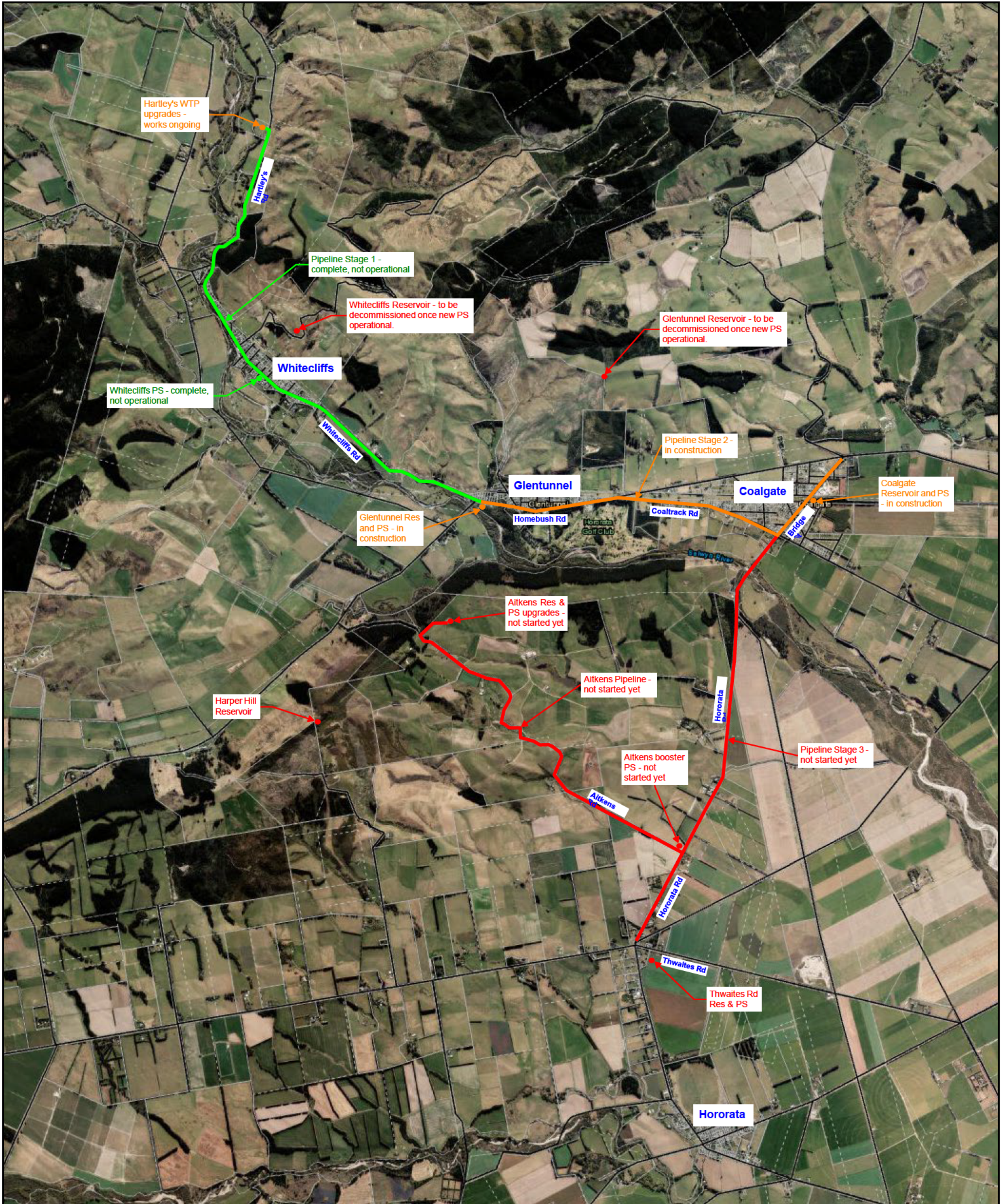
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Geddes'.

Heather Geddes
Selwyn Water Limited

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Selwyn Water Map



2/24/2026, 2:02:02 PM

World_Boundaries_and_Places
 LINZ Road Centre line
 Ratepayer Information
 LINZ Parcel
 World Imagery

Low Resolution 15m Imagery
 High Resolution 60cm Imagery
 High Resolution 30cm Imagery
 Citations
 9.6m Resolution Metadata

