



SocialLink – Tūhono Pāpori¹ is the umbrella peak body for the social and community sector and represents over 1500 organisations and individuals working in the Western Bay of Plenty

SocialLink walks alongside social service providers, community and Māori organisations to strengthen their capability as they deliver services to their communities, as well as advocates for the sectors interests, social justice and equity of opportunity for all people living in the WBOP.

www.sociallink.org.nz

Submission on the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Amendment Bill to the Finance and Expenditure Committee

February 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Amendment Bill. SocialLink is committed to mana ōrite partnership and honouring te Tiriti o Waitangi and as such this submission focuses on the Bill's impact on Māori, specifically whenua Māori and on funding for community infrastructure.

SocialLink acknowledges the Government's intention behind the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Amendment Bill, which is to improve the usability and flexibility of the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act 2020 as a funding tool for infrastructure needed to support growth and development. We recognise the challenges that councils and communities face in delivering essential infrastructure, including financing constraints and complex processes.

Implications of lack of consultation with tangata whenua on changes to how Māori land is viewed and potential impact for them (eg Clause 9; Clause 14)

SocialLink is very disappointed that there was not more in-depth consultation with Māori in the development of this Bill, even though this bill proposes changes to how Māori land is viewed and considered as part of this process.

We note that in the regulatory impact statement the consultation was limited to a subset of potentially affected parties, 'testing preliminary views on Māori housing impacts with Te Matapihi (national peak body for Māori housing) and a small selection of Māori housing developers as part

¹ Legal name is Social Sector Innovation Western Bay of Plenty Charitable Trust: Charities registration number CC50192.

of targeted engagement on problem definition’ pg 58² However it did not record engagement with iwi, hapū, Māori Land Trusts or other relevant kaupapa Māori entities

In line with the Crown obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is strongly asserted that Māori needed to be engaged with in good faith at the commencement of the development of the Bill and indeed for any bill that impacts on Māori.

Specifically in relation to the proposed legislation, tangata whenua hold a unique status which is unlike any other shareholders of landholdings in Aotearoa New Zealand. As such, we appeal that the changes proposed around Māori land, in particular, do not disadvantage those shareholders in that land.

Community Infrastructure - Clause 6 Section 8 amended (Meaning of eligible infrastructure)

We **endorse the intention of Clause 6** which defines eligible infrastructure for funding to include community infrastructure projects not owned or controlled by a territorial authority. This will expand options for funding and development of important social and community facilities such as community centres or recreational space.

Liz Davies

Chief Executive

Socialink Tūhono Pāpori

Western Bay of Plenty

² regulatory impact statement ‘Going for Housing Growth – Improving Local Government Improving Local Government Infrastructure Funding Settings (November 2024 updated June 2025)