

HEARING EVIDENCE – KEITH AND CHRISSY ADAMS

1. Firstly we would like to thank you for this opportunity to give some depth to our situation in support to our previous written submission.
2. We are fortunate that we have engaged in this process over the last couple of years to now be at the level of understanding that we have, as Sheep and Beef farmers. Many Sheep and Beef farmers are only just starting to realise the extent the plan will impact on their businesses and homes in the future and when spoken to tell us they find it all just too hard. They say you are fighting a losing battle. We have definitely struggled at times to juggle our involvement with our farm business, family and other community commitments.
3. We want you to keep in the back of your minds as you make your decisions, that just because Sheep and Beef farmers are not in the room today, it doesn't mean that they are not interested in their future. We are here because we know this plan impacts on our future, many of our peers, simply cannot grasp the logic of the plan, or the process and so dismiss it as too difficult to participate. Collectively we have tried to give you a picture of the many and varied farming businesses affected by this plan.

What our situation and property looks like.

4. We are now the first Sheep & Beef farm heading toward Waihaorunga, 6km up off SH82. We purchased our "Douglas Settlement property" upon selling our fourth generation "grazing and old mining property in the Maerewhenua" and crossing the Waitaki River in 1992. One of the main considerations in the generational change happening at that time, was purchasing a property that had further scope and flexibility for the future, for the family. "Good soil types and with a cattle block for year round stability and a farm with self sufficiency going forward". Since then and throughout any dry years, there has been one year only in which some of the capital stock have had to be grazed off farm where instead of us as a family on our annual camping holidaying up at the lakes, it was the cattle grazing above Lake Pukaki.
5. Our 200ha Douglas Settlement property has proved to be a healthy stock property with good diversity and with the good heavy mostly Claremont, Timaru soils on the 75 ha flats that compliment the 125ha Hill block of Kauru soils. This together with careful management has enabled scope for the animals during wet and dry seasons and enabled us to farm to the weather conditions.
6. Our low cost grass feed operation produces quality animals with minimal chemical inputs. Changes of neighbours, the addition of dairy grazing and the close proximity now, of other's cattle has meant that we have had to move to the practice of immunising stock against BVD and limiting the use of our cattle yard facilities, to others in the district which is rather disappointing to us, being the community

minded people that we are. These substantial cattle yards were built by the family, out of income during 1993/1994. This year having finally been concreted, they now assist further in the health and safety of both animals and handlers. Over the past 5 years somewhere in the region of 8500 head of cattle have been trucked in/out and through our cattle yards, to and from winter grazing locally in the Douglas area and a further 4200 head would have been walked up and down our 2km "No exit gravel road" to and from grazing locally.

7. The Ewes are drenched twice yearly and lambs up to 3 to 4 times before sale. No drench resistance is evident and Lambing % over the last 10yrs averages' 153% with records showing variances between 120%-160%, mostly weather dependant. The fit Mixed Age ewes are lambed on the hill mostly unassisted. The Young stock are lambed on the flats. The "Original Douglas Settlement Woolshed" stockyards were replaced out of income during 1998/1999. Presently the woolshed continues to be used by others in the district and was the Venue for the District's 100th Centenary celebrations in 2012.
8. The property has also grown many varied crops and been a pig farming venture in its previous history. It responds well with very little chemical inputs. Being in a basin it is known locally to "hang on" in dry conditions a good three weeks longer than others in the district. This is also due to the receiving of water from numerous local district tile drains put in many years ago by the pioneers of the District and a large catchment and volumes of water that at times come off the distant and surrounding hills. Four intermittent flowing drainage ditches converge on our flats to one stream before making it's way down through the waterfall cutting, round the eastern, bottom of our hill block, and down the South branch of the Waihao River.

Staged development funded from income.

Until now development as farm income allows has proven to be "a sustainable way forward for the future of our family farm over our past generations".

9. In 1863 George Adams arrived in New Zealand at Kakanui with his mother and remaining siblings. In 1881 he purchased land and settled in the Maerewhenua and was the first generation of our family to commence farming land in New Zealand on his own account. His son Charles Edward Adams was married in 1904 by this time gold has been found in the Maerewhenua hills and running the gold claim became his preferred vocation. Later he purchased a number of neighbouring 100acre blocks from the unsuccessful miners adding to the family farm. By 1920 his son Charles Douglas Adams at age 12 had left school and started his working life. His passion, the stock and "teams of horses". He was also involved making and graveling the roads, working and breaking in the land, ploughing and sowing, binders and threshing mills, contracting and harvesting throughout the district.

10. Then the start of the new technology – Mechanical – he purchased his first tractor in 1956. He also made and sold concrete fencing posts, trapped and sold rabbits and also purchased further 100acre blocks from farm income and through his diversification, bringing in further mining ground from gorse and broom. Through these times there were always extra workers required on the property. Charles Douglas Adams was joined in partnership by his son Keith Charles Adams in 1975. He too also worked off farm at times under the guidance of other landowners, gathering further knowledge and skills. They farmed together until his fathers death in 1983 when Keith purchased the property.
11. Moving forward to today and adding to the skills and farming information passed down through the generations about the land and the rivers and the weather and how they perform and react under different conditions, real and practical stuff – It's now also about taking in and using the new information, accurate information. Store lambs and purebred Hereford Bull Calves are these days put over scales and sold by weight rather than by number, trials and research – new proven technologies, stock genetics, the many new varieties and chemicals for crop enhancement and weed control – All of these can assist farmers to increase production.
12. Their use also has to be carefully balanced to give surety and a future for us and the next generations of our family farmers. We and our next generations should not be constrained and restricted by “a certain point in time, a Nitrogen baseline and the presumption of a particular land use”. All properties go through development periods at various times. Like in 2007/2008 when Keith spent days/months actually internally re-fencing our hill block into more practical and manageable blocks. 5km of 7 wire fence plus a solar electric outrigger wire to improve production. There will be future development he will also personally undertake, more Lucerne paddocks to be put in, up to 20ha over the next 5 or so years, weather dependant for good establishment and out of income, not debt funded.
13. An appropriate and ongoing waterway fencing programme has been a major exercise over the years on the flats. This continues to be implemented as farm income has allowed together with stock bridges at access points across waterways and culverts. Re-fencing on the flats has also allowed extensions in farm to the reticulated stock water scheme and limited plantings, ornamental and native also continue to be made.

Irrigation Possibilities:

14. Our initial involvement with this process came about because we fully anticipated that we would become Irrigators through the then “proposed Waihao Downs Irrigation Scheme”. We had been full financial supporters throughout the feasibility

studies from day one. Anticipating that we would be placed, to cost effectively “Do it once do it right”.

15. Our “Professionally Reviewed Design/Plans and Financials” have not stacked up as cost effective for this property to take up irrigation with “Waihao Downs Irrigation Scheme”, which doesn’t necessarily rule out a future generation coming to a different decision about the financial sustainability of larger scale irrigation for our property.
16. We have willingly agreed to allow a bore being put down on our property to monitor water quality. This “set of scheme data collection bores” have only started this year.

The Process

17. In our view the ECAN consultation process was hugely represented by Irrigators and the Dairy Industry, a few Fish and game and local Iwi representatives and a few other farmers. It would appear that overall ECAN gained little understanding or regard for our farming practices in our district or their requirements, businesses or livelihoods.
18. Thankfully when we pulled staff up about “the ECAN jargon” and “please keep things in simple language” some staff were listening and we thank you for this. In our view others participating were overly analytical, bullying and displayed no practical appreciation, knowledge or application to “the District as a whole entity” or desire for some of the issues raised or needing to be more fully informed and discussed to be adequately addressed. Others assured and advised us that “If Hunter Downs and augmentation doesn’t go ahead we are back round the table and starting again”.
19. To assist us in understanding how this was to affect us, we collated the information requested and forwarded it to the Fertilizer Company and had our 2009-2013 Baseline Nitrogen Budgets prepared in April 2014. Overseer Version 6.1.1 during this timeframe- 2 years were without dry land winter dairy grazing, 1 year was with dry land winter beef cattle grazing and 1 year was with dry land winter dairy heifer grazing. The Baseline average didn’t change. We note Beef + Lamb NZ have now recently had some other farms in the catchment area completed and we commend the findings of the “Statement of Evidence of Dr Samuel James Dennis” for your further consideration.
20. Something that has stood out to us - is the lack of “actual data” and “inadequate water quality monitoring throughout the district prior to any large scale irrigation consents being given”. It is surprising when the irrigation schemes have been proposed in one form or another for nearly 20 years. It seems that too many decisions are being made on varying and inadequate estimated data.

Personal Responsibility and Personal choice

21. The Environment does not have a choice – It is people's choices that have contributed to make the Environment what it is today. One size does not fit all farms and farming types. We have personally chosen not to increase our debt to receive Irrigation or to fund our ongoing development. Others have made their choices over the past years. Our properties should not be devalued because of others personal choices about how they manage their properties, when we have made a decision based on what we think are sound environmental and economic principals. We purchased good soil types for our family's future farming sustainability and thinking ahead to succession and we find it fundamentally wrong that our property should be "Economically disadvantaged and restricted into the future because we choose to farm what we consider to be more environmentally soundly on our soil types" and topography".
22. It may appear that this is about Sheep and Beef farms vs other land uses. We are most definitely not anti dairying. Our adult children and their respective wife and husband currently and successfully "Jointly Contract milk and manage a 1300 dairy cow property in the catchment". So we are in the very unusual situation of being able to understand and see both sides of the equation. An understanding that we have carried throughout this process.
23. It is our view that opportunities and choices for our children in farming are being taken away with the proposed plan, should they wish to continue to farm this property in the future.

KC & B Adams
Douglas Settlement



Tabled at Hearing on 4 November 2015

KC & CB Adams

PC3- SCCS- Hearing submission.

4th Nov 2015











Bull Paddock - intermittent creek

Bull Paddock Creek – Oct15



And in Flood – Nov 2014



Additional in paddock flow in flooding

Flat Paddock – Oct 2015

Flat Paddock – Nov 2014



Stock Bridge into the Lane



Under flood – Nov 2014



Oct - 2015



Nov- 2014



Boundary Entry before the Bridge























