

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991
AND
IN THE MATTER of the hearing of submissions on
Proposed Plan Change 3 to the Land and
Water Regional Plan

BY **OTAIO WATER USERS GROUP**
Submitters

TO **CANTERBURY REGIONAL COUNCIL**
Local Authority

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ROB MCILRAITH, ASHBOURNE FARM

Dated: 10 November 2015

**GALLAWAY COOK ALLAN
LAWYERS
DUNEDIN**

Solicitor on record: B Irving
Solicitor to contact: B Irving
P O Box 143, Dunedin 9054
Ph: (03) 477 7312
Fax: (03) 477 5564
Email: bridget.irving@gallowaycookallan.co.nz

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Rob McIlraith. I own Ashbourne Farm with my wife, Angela. Our farm is located in the lower catchment beside the Otaio River. We farm 146 hectares of intensive arable, 16 hectares of irrigated beef and lamb fattening, and 42 hectares dryland arable.
2. The availability of sufficient water for irrigation through the whole season is essential to the viability of our business. Without it we would not get our vegetable seed crops to germinate and grow. If adequate water is not available for our property it would equate to a cost of \$7000 - \$19,000 per hectare. The costs of growing these crops ranges from \$2000- \$3000 per hectare. These costs, if not recovered, would impact significantly on our total farm profitability.
3. As well as through the season, we also need water post-harvest to grow feed for the livestock part of our business.
4. Currently we have water permits for 55 l/s out of the river and a deep well at 63l/s. We currently have a new well under development to ensure a sustained flowrate is available to operate our irrigation system. The lack of water has an impact on the growth rates and success of our crops. Under the proposed minimum flow regime we are told from modelling our reliability (at full take rate) will fall from 65% to 51%. This is not a tenable situation. Given that, this year we decided to drill and develop a new deep well. This comes at a significant upfront cost. To date we have spent the following:

Consents	\$3,450.00
Consultants	\$6,028.00
Well drilling	\$69,111.00
Well testing	\$14,003.00
Coupling to existing system	\$17,476.00
Power	\$27,620.00

Pump and electrical	\$70,000.00 - \$100,000.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$207,688.00-\$237,688.00</u>

5. We accept there will be extra running costs with the pump size kilowatts having doubled in size. What those will be exactly is a little uncertain but knew we could not operate with the further restrictions that result from a minimum flow of 90l/s, in addition to managing the self-limiting nature of the take.
6. Through the Plan development process our group looked for a solution. We were able to compile one by employing a variety of different measures. All of them impose significant costs on our operations.

Rob McIlraith
Ashbourne Farm

10 November 2015