

From: [Paul | Water Strategies](#)
To: [Mailroom Mailbox](#)
Cc: [Margaret Spencer-Bower](#)
Subject: Plan Change 7 to the LWRP Submission
Date: Friday, 13 September 2019 4:18:10 PM

To whom it may concern

Please find attached the Submission from Margaret Spencer Bower. She was unable to send from her email address but all future correspondence with regard to this submission should be directed to Margaret at the cc'ed claxby@xtra.co.nz email address

Regards Paul Reese

Paul Reese

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From: [Margaret Spencer-Bower](#)
To: [Paul | Water Strategies](#)
Subject: update
Date: Thursday, 5 September 2019 5:51:18 PM
Attachments: [submission.docx](#)

Paul please tick I will be heard so I can keep in the loop. Many thanks

Margaret Spencer-Bower
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Name Margaret Jennifer Spencer-Bower
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I wish to be heard in support of the submission

This submission is in support of the 'Claxby irrigation scheme', and 'Next generation farmers' NGF submissions.

Declaration

I could not gain any advantage through this submission and I am directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of this and the 'Claxby Irrigation scheme' and 'Next Generation Farmer' submissions.

Signed: Margaret Spencer Bower

The Spencer Bower family have been farming and living in the Waimakariri District for 5 generations and have a proud history of farming pioneering and community involvement. We, as a family, are passionate about the land we farm and the districts health and well being as a whole. We want to be able to continue to farm and contribute to the community and district and regional economy and its prosperity.

1853 - My husband's great grandfather took up the run which we are farming part of now. Land that has never been sold, and we feel a very proud heritage of being able to pass this onto the 5th generation, and then hopefully to the 6th generation that are our grandchildren.

In 1853, the land was manuka scrub, the run was between the Waimak & Eyre Rivers, many acres needed to run 1 sheep. Marmaduke Dixon unsuccessfully dug to 80 feet near the Waimak River to find drinking water for his sheep – instead he had to sledge from the Waimak.

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His priority was to find water and develop the land for the prosperity of New Zealand. The NZ population at the time being 90,000. Marmaduke Dixon was a pioneer of irrigation and stock water that helped to develop a lot of the Canterbury Plains barren land into productive farm land.

Extract(Lyttelton Times Dec 30th 1891)

“Mr Marmaduke Dixon has achieved a public service by his spirited experiment in the irrigation of the manuka land at Eyrewell. The details of that experiment were published in our issue of yesterday, and our readers have doubtless shared in our conviction that Mr Dixon has adopted a most efficient means of demonstrated the possibilities which are wrapped up in irrigation. Here is a tract of 33,000 acres of land, at present virtually barren and unprofitable.”

The challenge of taking barren unproductive land and improving the land has been the ongoing unselfish work of the family generations to improve as science and innovation has allowed to build the economy of NZ. From those early days, with a NZ population of 90,000 and very limited infrastructure, and extremely limited productive income, we now have land of below one 10th of the original size producing in excess of \$10 million of income which is filtered down the NZ economy of nearly 5 million population, supporting the families and infrastructure.

In the 1970's the 3rd generation, Marmaduke Spencer-Bower was deemed to be innovative in adding a boarder dyke scheme to our land. This was totally run by gravity and again part of the transformation to more productive farming for the benefit of NZ inc.. When the 4th generation took over, boarder dykes (a very cost effective way but moderate efficiency of applying water) was deemed negative as flood irrigation apparently pushed nutrients through the soil too quickly. To comply with environmental expectations Boarder Dykes were replaced by huge dollar investment into modern pivot irrigation. It wasn't long before the power bills, debt servicing of improvements, costly maintenance etc deemed sheep, cattle, cropping to be uneconomic. The only economically viable farming was dairying, especially as value of land had increased with demand for dairy convertible land and hence increased rates. *Fait accompli!*

We certainly agree agricultural intensification has caused undesirable effects, as has the increased population. Anywhere in the world you look back at the effects of progression and population growth – pollution also grows. Canterbury is not unique in this. We only have to look at the two highly polluted rivers in Canterbury – The Avon and The Heathcote to realise the pollution caused by urban population. Look further North to Auckland and the beaches that are unswimmable because of urban pollution.

Plan Change 7 is deeply dividing a community. A community that has grown from pioneering men & women supporting each other, encouraged by councils and government as it has grown the wealth of the country. Now the livelihoods of those people are at stake, some more than others.

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The community needs to work together to help solve the many mistakes of the past of increasing intensification driven by governments for the prosperity of NZ inc. Some of the mistakes: i.e. draining and building Christchurch, Kaiapoi and other small towns on swamps – a natural drain for the water off the plains, obviously can't be changed. But please please don't blame it all on farmers and possibly bankrupt them, we all need to work and own the issues together, urban and rural. Many farmers have taken the issues to heart and all doing their best to keep their nutrient inputs down, and spent hard earned income planting trees/wetlands to help. The lifestyle blocks, urban population also need to do their bit as well. Some are, some just blame others.

If Plan change 7 goes ahead, what will be the future of farming? By 2050 – do we have a 200 year cycle and go back to Manuka scrub?

What will the economy of the Waimak area be like then? No jobs, no industry, deserted towns?

General Submission

1. I support the long-term objectives and direction of the plan to improve water quality over time. Like all farmers, we wish to ensure the streams and rivers of the Waimakariri District are of good water quality and contain healthy ecosystems when we hand our farms onto the next generation.
2. I understand and appreciate that water quality has deteriorated in some parts of the district and that we have an environmental restoration challenge in front of us. However, we need time and confidence to continue developing our farming systems and infrastructure to successfully achieve these outcomes. As a family we want to be part of the solution and for our children to raise a seventh generation on the Claxby farms.
3. Given this, I have some significant issues with Plan Change 7:
 - a. I am particularly concerned the long-term Nitrogen reductions proposed in table 8.9 will result in our farming enterprise becoming unviable in the long-term. The impacts upon our and the surrounding farms will also have a significant impact upon the social and economic well-being of the local community.
 - b. Given this the long term proposed reductions are counterproductive as why would we do anything now when any efforts are wasted as we will not be able to farm in the long term.
 - c. I am concerned with the proposed nitrate sub-zones map. This is a divisive map and has no consideration on how it affects farmers mental well being and community cohesiveness. The subzones were not discussed during the zone committee process, of which I took an active interest in, and they have already had significant impact upon farmer well-being and community cohesion post plan notification. The sub-zones with significant long-term reductions severely impact the ability of these farms to secure debt or investor funding for future farm system change.

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4. Given all the above I think the plan should instead take a more adaptive and supportive approach:
 - a. The long-term water quality targets should be clearly defined and take account of the economic and social implications required to achieve them.
 - b. The water quality changes should be monitored through a comprehensive water quality and ecosystem health monitoring programme. The well being of the farmers and community should also be taken account of.
 - c. All farmers should be required to have Audited FEP, and meet GMP and their Baseline GMP number by 2020
 - d. All farmers be required to improve and over time reduce their environmental footprint by reducing nitrate losses and other water contaminants. Across the district farmers should be required to make nitrate reductions beyond their Baseline GMP number of 15% Dairy and 5% Other by 2030. Any further reductions should be informed by the water quality and community well being monitoring.
 - e. Catchment based initiatives of engineered solutions of MAR and TSA should be trialled, implemented and monitored as appropriate, and where possible support be provided for these and other waterway enhancement and restoration projects. These will provide a better resilience for the waterways to cope with land use impacts.
 - f. A plan change (in 10-years time) informed by all the information above, can then articulate any future nitrate reductions and/ or other mitigations required to achieve the water quality objectives with the required certainty.

Submission Ends