Dear Tavisha Fernando

Please find attached the statement of evidence relating to the submission of Johnny and Katie Croft of Croft Farming Limited, submitter ID 324.
Please reply to confirm you have received this document.

Kind regards

Katie and Johnny Croft
Statement of Evidence

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: Proposed Plan Change 7 (‘PC7’) to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan (‘CLWRP’)

Statement of evidence of Johnny and Katie Croft in support of submission by Croft Farming Limited

Dated: 16th July 2020
STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JOHNNY AND KATIE CROFT

INTRODUCTION

1 I, Jonathan (Johnny) Paul Croft am a director of Croft Farming Limited and provided a submission (Number 324) with my wife Katherine (Katie) Leigh Croft, on behalf of Croft Farming Limited on proposed plan change 7 to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

2 With my family we own and operate a 212 hectare mixed farming operation comprising of dairy support, cropping and sheep on Steffens Road, Waimakariri District, Canterbury.

3 I have lived on our farm my whole life. My father, Thomas lived here from a young age. My grandfather George purchased the property in 1954.

4 I am a shareholder of Waimakariri Irrigation Limited (‘WIL’).

5 Katie and I are very active members of our community, I coach Oxford Rugby and Cricket teams after having played in both these teams myself. I am on the rugby committee and also coach representative country cricket in our area. Katie has contributed to the local toy library committee, pony club committee, the local netball club as a coach and committee member and is currently chairperson of Cust School Board of Trustees. Our children attend the local school and are heavily involved in our farming and community lives.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

6 My evidence provides:

6.1 an overview of our farming operation and environmental compliance requirements;
6.2 the implications and effects of the proposed rule framework.

6.3 reasons for supporting WIL and NGF submissions.

Our Farming Operation

7 As noted previously, with my family own and operate a 212 hectare mixed farming operation comprising of dairy support, cropping and sheep on Steffens Road, Waimakariri District, Canterbury.

8 We have 100 sheep after many years of running a corriedale breeding operation and now graze dairy stock for a local farmer. We grow crops including barley, oats, kale, fodder beet and have trialled growing seed based crops in the past. We work in with a local beekeeper to have his bees wintering on our land.

9 95% of our property is able to be irrigated under the WIL scheme using pivot and gun based irrigation.

10 Over the past 3 years we have invested approximately 30% of our income annually into environmental improvements. We have sought input from ECa, spending time with the local Biodiversity Officer, learning about good management practice, new ideas and following his recommendations for wetland areas, including stock exclusion and planting.

Previous 5 years on farm improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Overseer capture</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replace gun irrigator with more suitable pivot system</td>
<td>$250,000 capital $12,000 p.a (Int and R&amp;M)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing of waterways</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinstate bridge over Cust</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Cost</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Piped stockwater reticulation to more paddocks</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Utilise Onfarm data irrigation management support service</td>
<td>$2800 installation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Installed REGEN system to add to the soil moisture monitoring already undertaken</td>
<td>$3,000 Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1200 p.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Our environment plan is guided by the information from soil testing, water testing, irrigation monitoring, our financial situation and advice from professionals.

11.1 Good management practice we currently focus on are:

- Irrigation management through monitoring, recordings and upgrading our irrigators to pivot based system and using Regen.
- Nutrient management by use of soil testing, nutrient plans, cultivation methods, crop testing and input from the fertiliser company.
- Water source management is done by ongoing riparian planting, excluding stock from waterways, changing the way stock water is delivered by installing troughs.

11.2 The Farm Environment Plan process has given us a way to focus on the environment in our farming operation, given structure to what we are doing, and enabled us to prioritise our investment in this area. We have learnt a lot about the environment, what GMP means and currently we are looking at mahinga kai as an area to improve. The Farm has a current ‘B’ grade audit.

11.3 To be able to make informed decisions regarding the farming operation we have support from WIL through the FEP audit process, from linking us with knowledgeable people in the environmental space, having strong governance and giving us confidence standards are being met across the collective.

12. Carleton Run has a significant cultural connection with our family. We are sharing these photos to show for us it is mana whenua, our family has stories and history based on this land, it provides sustenance for our family, and is tangata whenua for all family to return to as their birthplace. We may not be Maori but as New Zealanders we are kaitiaki of this land, custodians and keepers for generations to come.

We have for many years worked to protect the environment, from hand laying clay pipes to address water logging in the 1970s, planting many trees so today we have strong shelter belts, trees of family significance to us and a untouched area of the farm for 60 years which we call “the wild” where the children are doing trapping. We have stories of trout being caught in the Cust River where the children continue to fish in hope, legends of huge eels living in our water ways, and hours spent running to save eels by returning them to the water after stock water drains are cleared out. Planting together and watching pukeko chicks in their nest in our riparian planting in pond areas. Sharing our land with our extended family and community (giving others agriculture experiences, visiting school groups to hosting netball prize giving in our woolshed). We are now 3rd and 4th generation living and working on this land.
EFFECT OF PC7

13 The financial impact of PC7 will have a detrimental effect on our family’s ability to operate the farm in the future. Given the historical investments and changes to improve our environment as stated above, any further changes to improve the environment will be extremely complicated. Especially by the subgroups areas of which we are in 3 different ones for our property.

14 We are now burdened with financial challenges due to the investments that we have made to reduce our environmental impact, which were made on the basis that we would be able to continue to farm at our current level of intensity to offset the investment. We are unsure where to go from here.

15 Winter grazing accounts for approximately 60% of farm income and to reduce nitrogen loss to the 40% required under sub area E the number of cattle grazing would have to be reduced by approximately two thirds. To meet the 40% (sub-area E) reduction required for this property would mean a reduction in operating profit (Earnings before interest and tax) of up to 60% to around $125 /ha. This level of income is unsustainable for this family farming business.

16 These requirements will restrict the way we can farm the land to provide a means of supporting our family. We will not be able to invest in future environmental improvements for financial reasons and if the plan goes ahead as per Table 8.9 it will not be financially viable to remain farming.

17 We are concerned about the negative impact PC7 as it is, will have on the mental health of those in our community. The pressure and potential helplessness of the situation if the rules stay as they are or similar for individuals and families is concerning.

CONCLUSIONS

18 We are extremely proud of our improvements to our environment. We believe that we are great caretakers of the land and our willingness to work alongside ECan demonstrates this. We intend to continue to work
with ECAn and continue to improve our environment. However, environmental improvements must be sustainably achieved over a period of time, supported by science and technology.

19 PC7 needs to move away from a “predicted model” to a “measured science” in respect of nitrate management and we believe that a review of the Plan should occur in 2030 to test the changes farmers have been asked to partake in and ensure this is focussed on science.

20 The impact of PC7 on ourselves, our extended family, our schools and community will be significant. Our communities will lose people and their families and their knowledge. This will mean our schools, kids and communities will suffer as people like us who coach sports teams constantly, help at community fundraisers, are on committees and schools boards, will not be able to contribute.

21 I understand that WIL has proposed an alternative rule framework and I support their submission and the outcomes sought, especially in relation to the monitoring and measurement and solutions based packages.

22 I understand that NGF have provided scientific evidence and proposed a solutions based package and I support their submission.