

Tēnā koutou i tēnei ata Commissioners,

My name is Andrew Mockford and I am the CEO of Opuha Water Ltd.

Thank you for the opportunity this morning to briefly speak to the evidence I have submitted as part of the group representing Opuha Water Ltd in respect to Plan Change 7.

To be honest this is fairly daunting as this represents the culmination of 4 years of significant work and collaboration with our shareholders and the community within which we operate. The gravity of the outcome from these proceedings has the potential to have major negative impact upon our business and our community, which are some very perverse outcomes for a business that has been held up as a success story of how water storage, irrigation and renewable energy can be done by working with and for our local communities.

I wish you all the best in deliberations.

This has also been challenging to distil down all of the important and salient points into a short presentation. I acknowledge that you all will have read the evidence supplied so I will aim to just reinforce some of the key aspects of that evidence here.

- Opuha Water Ltd is a Community Focused Co-op, whilst it has changed its name and construct over time, the community focus of the business has not waivered since inception
- Opuha Water supports the intent of what PC7 is trying to achieve but we have serious issues with a number of critical aspects which detract from the central and pivotal role OWL will play in this catchment moving forward.
- There is significant disappointment around the position reflected from ECan in the notified PC7 and the subsequent s42a report. We feel we have battled this entire multiyear process to get ECan to **actively listen** and develop the necessary catchment understanding.
- For the duration of the process from OTOP ZIPA development to PC7 writing, OWL has made every effort to ensure we present and represent a balanced community approach, and solutions package, for our local catchment.
- OWL, ORRP and OEFRAG has worked well, notwithstanding minor issues, this only works when OWL can operate as a whole system. PC7 and s42a as they stand will fracture the balance that presently exists within the OWL system and create some very real perverse outcomes that benefits nobody.
 - De-coupling
 - Water inefficiencies
 - Removal or minimisation of the local community ability to appropriately react to climatic, lake and river conditions
- The cumulative nature of all these tiny (and some not so tiny) cuts **will** lead to negative environmental outcomes, which is the exact opposite of what OWL and its community partners want and have been striving for our catchment.
- The Opuha Dam, Opuha Water Ltd and its predecessor entities have brought significant prosperity, both environmental and social. The burden of operation, maintenance and

capital investment sits only with the shareholders of OWL. Shareholders are presently content with this obligation but the potential unnecessary erosion of their entitlements resulting from PC7 severely taints the present community focus.

- There has been no recognition, not even an attempt, of the significant environmental benefits resultant from the Opuha Dam since its creation. When you read and digest the state of the river, the local environment and community vibrancy pre the dam, it is plain to see the value it has added. This value has been paid for, and continues to be paid for by solely the OWL shareholders. Our districts current vibrancy and resilience is due in no small part to the availability of environmentally sustainable, reliable water.
- The system we have currently is not fundamentally broken, yes we have areas that need attention and improvement; we have not and will not shy away from these areas that require attention. To do so with decent effect, OWL must be a coherent whole after the PC7 direction is decided upon. The more that OWL and the Opihi catchment system is picked apart, the more the present synergies will be lost and the resultant discrete parts will lack the effectiveness and efficiency available today. Again these are perverse outcomes that I believe nobody wants, least of all OWL. We all want a thriving environment, a vibrant community and partnership approach to our collective future pathways.

Thank you again for your time to present here today. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Thank you.

Tēnā koutou i tēnei ahiahi Commissioners,

My name is Andrew Mockford and I am the CEO of Opuha Water Ltd.

Thank you for the opportunity this afternoon to briefly speak to the evidence I have submitted as part of the Adaptive Management Working Group in respect to Plan Change 7.

Again this has been challenging to distil down all of the critical and salient points into a short presentation. I acknowledge that you all will have read the evidence supplied so I will just reinforce some of the key aspects of that evidence here and also present 5 slides to give an example of some of the information pertinent to great decision making in this catchment.

- Adaptability is the key to success in our catchment; local decision makers with the best interest of the river at heart making timely decisions considering the whole of the season.
- The OEFRAG construct is an exemplar of community collaboration to effect great decisions. Too loose this entity is a marked step backwards for the health of the Opihi River.
- I fully support the 24hr average min flow at SYB. There is strong support based upon operation efficiencies and therefore greater storage allowing for more options intra-season.
- AMWG system proposed is a community escalation system that raises a flag for the community management group (OEFRAG) to convene and subsequently review the present climatic, river and lake conditions with a view to unanimously agree on the best action to take now, whilst considering the whole of the season ahead.
- Restriction Regimes proposed by PC7 and s42a, are well off the mark when reviewed against the AMWG proposed regime. Again the community group has built in considerations with regard to the wider community so the impact and outcomes are well balanced across the environmental, social and economic domains.
- Dr Kerr's modelling has clearly illustrated the negative implications to water storage that PC7 and s42a present in his evidence.
- The Section 42a restriction regime proposed is a binary approach with intent to work within an fully analogue environment. It is either no restriction or a minor restriction. There is no attempt to proactively conserve water which is a significant community learning identified by other AMWG members in their evidence. This position as taken in the s42a just reinforces a flippant approach to lake storage management. To suggest a regime of this nature shows a significant lack of understanding around the Opihi catchment system and flies in the face of the considerable learning and development the community (through OEFRAG) have made in its approach to effective catchment management.
- These restrictions have to be considered in the vane that they are to be applied, these are exception regimes to manage abnormal situations. The AMWG regime is a system that will support effective and proactive decisions with the interest of the river environment at the forefront of each decision.

- It has been alarming to see that a report of the standing and importance of a s42a could be compiled and submitted with such a clear lack of understanding around how the catchment and its community operate. Following the s42a min flow restriction thresholds in the revised table 14x, the Opihi River at SYB would have been under water restrictions for 6 out of the last 12 months. OWL working with OEFrag has had no river restrictions in place in the last 12 months because we could be adaptable.
- The 2030 full availability min flows are hydrologically off the mark as evidenced by Mr Webb and Mr Horrell.
- An adaptable and agile restriction regime needs full discretion around when the restriction regime can start. To limit a regime to an arbitrary 1st of the month date that the conditions must be met is incredibly counterproductive.

Thank you again for your time to present here today. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Thank you.