

Opening

Good afternoon, my name is Sue Sheaf and I am one of the owners of the property at 142 Birchs Road, along with my husband John.

One of the reasons people want to live in Prebbleton is because of its village and community feel.

You can imagine then, that the advent of this plan change was a great shock to us. Having purchased our property at 142 Birchs Road as a long term project, and our permanent home, with a lot of work to be done, a lot of money to be spent, we were not in the market for a sale.

7 years ago we purchased a very run-down property - a run down house, and overgrown grounds, including one third of our almost 6000 square meter property planted in beautiful 50+ year old trees that were being choked by ivy and old man's beard, surrounded by rubbish of various sorts.

In the last 5 years we have completely rebuilt the house and renewed the grounds,

The council gave us an assurance that Hamptons Road was the boundary for Prebbleton, we were buying a rural property, and we need never fear being built out. Growth areas in Prebbleton have always been east/west and this will continue with the approved plan changes.

Ms Konigkramer mentions Prebbleton as a country town in her report, however if Prebbleton ceases to have natural boundaries, as proposed by PC79, we will become an ugly access route to the city, and our village atmosphere will be gone.

As is already known, Prebbleton village has two large plan changes approved - PC68, which is now operative and PC72 which is only waiting for a minor extension. A conservative estimate would state that these subdivisions provide enough land for the next ten years and with the possibility of infill and medium density use, they could last 30 years.

The current economic downturn with a considerable raising of interest rates, and a significant rise in inflation, has only served to slow the flow of consent applications and housing sales, so these two subdivisions could indeed provide more than sufficient housing needs for many years to come.

I would also like to make it clear that despite Mr Geddes assertion in his report that we have refused to talk to him from the beginning, we have had only one phone call from him, some 2 years ago, and we have not heard anything from him by phone, mail or email since then. He has told others that he is going to talk to us about our property but we have not heard from him since.

Mr Geddes states in clause 18, "provision has been made for those (properties) that cannot be obtained"..... we do not know what this means, because we have not heard any detail from him regarding the way he would make PC79 look attractive from our property.

Culture

Surprising that Ngai Tahu doesn't see the land of PC79 as a taonga or treasure - As the NPS-HPL states, it is "an irreplaceable treasure and a source of life and wellness for our country. Our economy depends on our land, and our history and culture are tied to it. We have a duty to cherish and protect it for future generations".

In the proposer's supporting documents, the plans and outlines used to describe the cultural aspect of this proposal are very sketchy and not to scale. A river and Lake Ellesmere suddenly appear near the southern boundary of PC79! The links with Maori culture are tenuous and the practical working out of creating housing aimed at Ngai Tahu whanau is not detailed at all and I am extremely doubtful that this could ever occur in practice.

Mr Christie states in his Whakatauki - or proverb in English:
"A mo ka uri a muri ake nei"
For us and our children after us

It is very difficult to align this whakatauki or proverb with a desire to chop up this rural land of the very highest quality in NZ, into very small allotments, and covering it with concrete, never to be available as land again, especially when it is not even necessary - as we have been shown by the expert reports, there are lots of allotments available or about to be available, in Prebbleton without PC79.

I see no evidence of Te Ao Turoa - the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, or Kaitiakitanga - the stewardship of our resources.

In fact on our property, we are very much as Kaitiaki - clearing the Ivy and old mans beard, dead trees, and have begun planting natives. We have korimako - bellbirds, and piwakawaka - fantails and are aiming to entice Tui back next.

We rely on the water race which supplies fresh water to a pond on our grounds which supports bird life and much of our ecosystem.

We have planted some 25 fruit trees - self-sufficiency

Following such a huge rebuild and renewal of the grounds, it would be unreasonable to think that we would leave this place.

Site Context

Glaring inaccuracies in the proponent's evidence and that of his support documents. The closest residential property, that of the Gilmore's, is a lot closer than 150metres from the proposed site boundary.

Our own property, while not literally outside of the boundary, but which will remain in our ownership, is only 8-9 metres from the boundary where houses could be built. We still have not had any assurances that this subdivision or any other development, if approved, would be conducted with sensitivity towards our western boundary, which is very close as stated.

Mr Christie, in his culture document, espouses many great Maori values, such as Manaakitanga, caring for others, Kaitiakitanga - stewardship of our resources, in this case our land and people, and Rangatiratanga, leadership - however as extremely close neighbours of this plan change, we do not feel any care or stewardship of resources at all. His report is also very short on detail about how these values would be worked out in practice in a subdivision. As far as Rangatiratanga is concerned, we are not impressed with Mr Geddes' leadership style and integrity so far in this application.

Site of peaks - tokenism - only a few dwellings on the eastern boundary, will have this view, all the rest will be blocked.

2 or 3 storey houses will ruin our rural context. As Maori, my rural views are very important to me, I stand to lose my views, sunsets and I assume all of the mature trees will be cut down.

Kakaha Park is a great addition to our local rural area. The Council were very careful to consult neighbours and assure us that security would be provided via security cameras, and despite more people accessing the park, as a direct neighbour, we do not feel unsafe or that it is a security risk. We would feel more at risk with a subdivision on our boundary where three dwellings are permitted on 400 square metre allotments, creating an much less healthy aspect and much more crowding for people's lives.

Traffic and Transport

All of the experts have pointed out the upgrades necessary to accommodate the growth of traffic throughout the Prebbleton area. While the Southern motorway has been a great improvement, it does not alter the accumulation of traffic that travels through Prebbleton from Lincoln and beyond, via Springs and Birchs Roads.

There have been no solutions offered to the problems of this 'upstream' traffic which flows through on a daily basis, resulting in clogged roads around this area. While roundabouts do assist the flow of traffic, they cannot alter the numbers. Adding more unnecessary subdivisions will simply exacerbate the problems.

It is frustrating to be quoted statistics that try to prove that the traffic flow is satisfactory when the evidence as a resident demonstrates a completely different picture. The recent reduction in speed on Springs Road through the village to 40kmh, is not adhered to without a police presence. Likewise speeding on Birchs Road is common, with cars travelling at 80kmh long before they pass Hamptons Road heading south.

Cars entering or leaving roads and driveways off Birchs regularly face aggressive drivers, and allowing access from this proposed subdivision will add to the problem. I particularly oppose the road accessing the subdivision opposite Leadleys Road, as it will increase the already high risk of accidents on that corner. The new Kekaha park traffic will only add to this problem, especially when taking into account its proximity to Leadleys Road.

While a modal shift towards increased use of public transport is suggested, this will take years to develop - surely approval of new subdivisions should come after there is sufficient transport capacity not before?

Walking and cycling connectivity are cited frequently in the proposer's reports. It needs to be pointed out recreational connectivity is all that can be referred to here. I do not see any evidence that cycling into the city, where most Prebbleton residents work, is feasible. Consequently this proposed plan change pays no attention to greenhouse gas emissions from the number of vehicles that will be associated.

I am pleased to note that some reports have explained how unsafe many of Prebbleton's existing cycleways are.

Climate Change and Emissions

From recent climate events we know that climate change is now affecting our country in a distressing manner. Approving unnecessary subdivisions such as this one, at a distance from most residents' workplaces, will just add to greenhouse gas emissions and make a mockery of the steps we need to take to avoid more climate change disasters.

The removal of mature trees on the site will only add to this.

Food security also becomes an issue

Conclusion

This plan change then, has no place in Prebbleton:

It is simply not needed because it has been established that there is more than sufficient land available for housing.

It sits outside of the town boundaries and would indeed be a peculiar urban addition amongst mainly larger blocks of land.

It seeks to utilise some of the country's best soils which we have been requested by Government, not to use for these purposes.