

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

and

IN THE MATTER of applications by the Central Plains  
Water Trust (CPWT), Central Plains  
Water Ltd (CPWL) and the Ashburton  
Community Water Trust.

Statement of Evidence of Earle F and Florence E E Williams

We oppose the above applications

The reasons for making our submission are set out below

We submit that the applicants have FAILED TO PROVE that their proposal adequately AVOIDS important adverse effects on the environment and therefore the resource applications must of necessity be declined and the Notice of Requirement withdrawn.

There are four main adverse effects:

1. This scheme FAILS to AVOID the pollution of some of Canterbury's aquifers and so threatens the world renowned purity of Canterbury's drinking water.  
(The system of Canterbury's aquifers is not yet fully understood and appreciated ).

- 2.It FAILS to AVOID unsustainable land use consistent with the climate and geography.

- a) Large scale dairy units are part of the drive behind this proposal. Canterbury, with its dry nor'west winds is the antithesis of natural dairying country. Dairying is notorious for needing large amounts of water and for polluting the area with nitrates, chemicals and bacteria.

(Compare the moisture-laden air of Waikato.)

We need to co-operate with nature, not work against it.

b) Long-term, despite short-term monetary gains, large-scale irrigation can wash the goodness from the relatively thin layer of soil on the Canterbury gravels. (cf Babylon, which is now in desert. Large areas in Northern Victoria, Australia are also becoming infertile from large-scale irrigation from sources totally unsuspected when the schemes were introduced.)

c) By proposing to flood the Wainiwaniwa valley this scheme threatens to destroy the present sustainable land use of long-established sheep farming, to destroy private homes and livelihood and at least one historic building.

(That is a huge adverse effect on the environment of all those living in the area.)

### 3. It FAILS to AVOID the possibility of flooding settlements.

a). Our rivers need strong maximum flow to carry gravel downstream. The Waimakariri river naturally threatens Christchurch and is already held back by an increasing number stopbanks.

Restricting strong flows would cause the river bed gradually to build up and become higher than the surrounding land, thus, as in New Orleans despite expensive stop banks, threaten to flood homes and pasture.

(cf 1958 when the Waimakariri missed Christchurch but burst through homes in Kaianga and near Spencer Park.)

b). The long dam is proposed to be built almost on top of the long-established settlement of Coalgate and any breach would immediately threaten the safety of residents.

(Would all the shareholder themselves be prepared to live so close to such a threat?)

### 4). The proposal FAILS to AVOID important adverse effects on the environment of private citizens and our public heritage.

a). Private Property. Using the Public Works Act to force private citizens to sell their homes and livelihoods to what is essentially a private enterprise seems manifestly unjust.

(It makes for uncertainty generally as to the extent of the powers of compulsory acquisition.)

b). Public Heritage. Access to pure water has long been accepted as part of the heritage of the general public in Canterbury. With increased awareness world-wide of the finite nature of the water supply, this scheme fails to avoid the adverse effects of such a large part of a public resource falling under private control.

(Short-term, shareholders could skim profits and then withdraw; long-term, the public needs to value our heritage and ensure that the responsibility for wise and informed long-term planning and protection of our water resources remains in the public domain.

These four areas are all important adverse effects of the proposed scheme.

They support our submission that the applicants have FAILED TO PROVE that their proposal adequately AVOIDS these adverse effects.

Therefore the resource applications must of necessity be declined.

We urge the consent authority to DECLINE ALL THE APPLICATIONS AND TO WITHDRAW THE NOTICE OF REQUIREMENT

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