

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

of applications for resource consents by the Central Plains Water Trust to the Canterbury Regional Council and a Notice of Requirement to Selwyn District Council for the designation of land by Central Plains Water Limited to construct and operate an irrigation scheme.

Statement of Evidence of Louise Margaret Deans

1. My name is Louise Margaret Deans. I presented evidence to the Central Plains Water Hearing 5 June 2008.
2. I wrote to the Commissioners in August 2009 in relation to the effects of the proposed CPWL headrace canal on Homebush.
3. I read in Mr Tipler's evidence on a revised CPWL scheme (para 6), that the headrace canal location will remain essentially unchanged. This means a significant area of Homebush land still remains affected by a Notice of Requirement for the construction of the headrace canal.
4. The revised scheme has not lessened the adverse effects on our historic property. As you are aware, the buildings at Homebush are of both national and regional significance and the classifications given by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust reflects their historical importance.

5. It is important to understand that a classification of Category 1 registers a building as being of national significance in New Zealand and that a classification of Category 2 registers a building or structure as being of regional significance.
6. There are eight classified buildings at Homebush, clustered along the base of the ridge. All of these buildings are also registered in the Ordnances of the Selwyn District Council.
7. The Homebush Woolshed which is visible from State Highway 72/77 on the Homebush corner is registered in Category 1. The Stables building with its working water turbine and tower is also registered as a Category 1 building. The Homestead is registered in Category 2 as are the Whare (old shearersquarters) behind the woolshed, the Sheep Dip, the Pigsties, the Applehouse and a beautiful little brick bridge. There is another dwelling dated by conservation architects to have been built in the early 1850s which is in the process of being classified. All of these structures are clustered on the southern edge of the proposed canal. Five of these registered buildings and structures will be affected by the construction of the canal as well as one historic cottage which is unregistered.
8. The canal will also destroy the north western end of the heritage garden with trees planted from the early 1850s.
9. The Woolshed (Category One) and the brick Shearers' Quarters (Category Two) behind the Woolshed are at risk. The heavy machinery needed to dig the channel must have an effect on these structures. An earthquake report done this year, 2009, on the Woolshed states that the foundations are weak, that the lime mortar would not hold the brick walls together in a moderate earthquake and that the roof should be lifted off the brick walls. I am concerned that the constant vibration of the heavy machines will be equivalent to a moderate earthquake over an extended period of time, to the detriment of these two iconic buildings. A report is needed to assess the effects on these two buildings of the construction of the canal.

10. As well as the potential detrimental effect on Woolshed and the Whare buildings, please be aware that the NoR comes over the top of the ridge behind the woolshed. This is an important aesthetic visual context for the woolshed and the whare. There are also notified trees on this hill. It is so beautiful on that hill that scenes from the Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe and other movies have been shot there. It would be a serious mistake to disturb the hill.
11. Further along the bottom of the ridge and tucked right underneath it are the Homestead and the Applehouse which are both registered in Category 2 by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. The foundations of the Homestead were laid in 1880 and the building was completed in 1904. The Applehouse was built in 1870 with a soft lime mortar to hold the bricks. The buildings were originally sited there for shelter from the nor'west wind and for water from the Waianiwaniwa River which flows around the foot of the hill.
12. The canal will run on the other side of this low ridge between two very steep little hills which form a narrow gully. The ground measurement between the house and the foot of the hill is approximately 15 metres. The distance under the hill to the canal site would be less than 100 metres. The canal has to be 30 metres wide with a 10 metre bank on either side, 50 metres in total at its narrowest course, and up to 100 metres wide. To achieve the minimum width, half of each hillside would need to be removed. When the hill is removed there might only be about 65 metres between the house and the canal.
13. I understand that this gully is the most difficult engineering part of the whole canal. It is not so much the plantation of trees that will have to be cleared before the heavy machinery can get in there, that I worry about. I have grave concerns about the effects of the pounding and vibration of heavy machinery which will be needed to carve these two hills in half in order to gain the minimum 50 metre width needed for the canal. The effects of heavy machinery working over a considerable period of time on the brickwork and foundations of the Homestead and the Applehouse need to be carefully assessed so that these two significant buildings are not shaken down.

14. The Homestead side of the hill was extensively planted out with rhododendrons and magnificent trees from the 1850s. These plantings would also be affected.
15. Another area of concern is the narrow opening where the canal emerges out of the narrow gully onto flat land. This area is the north west corner of the garden in a place which we call the "cathedral" because of its towering trees which were planted in the 1850s and are now listed in the SDC ordinances. There are also rhododendrons and other specimen trees. I work as a marriage celebrant and that area is a very popular place for weddings. The headrace canal will destroy this beautiful place and my livelihood.
16. As the canal proceeds north west, it will destroy a brick bridge registered in Category 2 NZHPT and the historic Mound Cottage which is unregistered.
17. The destruction of the buildings and the desecration of the heritage landscape enjoyed by many thousands of people every year is problematic for us all. It is my belief that the long term effects on these buildings and structures cannot be mitigated or avoided or remedied and that the visual effects relating to such an historic area will destroy the context in which these buildings and structures sit. I do not consider that CPWL has carried out adequate research to determine exactly what the long term effects will be on the buildings, the structures and the context in which they sit, will be, exactly. Without that, you do not have enough information to allow the Notice of Requirement on Homebush to proceed.
18. I also do not consider that CPWL has carried out an adequate investigation or analysis of alternative routes for the headrace canal in the vicinity of Homebush. Now that the reservoir and the dam are not going ahead, it is not necessary to run the canal to the foot of the dam as in the original plan. It would be cheaper and easier to run the canal on the other side of Homebush Road where the land is flat and *it* would not cause such substantial damage.

19. As part of my original evidence I asked that the Notice of Requirement be withdrawn from Homebush and in this submission I repeat that request.

Louise Deans
4 October 2009