

Submission
Christchurch City Council,
P.O.Box 237,
Christchurch
3/5/04



Suzanne Sullivan

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**Submission
on Christchurch City Council 2005 Draft Community Plan.**

I wish to make a submission regarding the above community plan with reference to the proposed change to rating differential.

My valuation reference is number is (235124321)

As owner of Lot 11, & residing at 10 Busch Lane Parc Provence, I wish to strongly voice my opposition to the above proposal (community draft plan 2005), with reference to the rating differential.

I purchased my block in the winter of 2000 on the basis that it was designated as rural land.

Apart from providing a residence, this block was to be developed as my retirement project. At 50 years old then, I was looking to the future when I was no longer in full time business. (ie. Retired). I have a Post Graduate Diploma in Horticultural Science, a B.A. from Canterbury University, & currently work as a Landscape Consultant (& have done so since I graduated from Lincoln in 1987)

I have a designated office in my home. Clients also have the advantage of being able to view many elements of design, & the various plants now growing in my large evolving garden.

It was always my intent to use the land to grow lines of trees or shrubs that I knew that I had trouble sourcing for my line of work. Maybe something value added, like topiary or the larger grade of plants not always available, (the time element) I have also looked into the possibility of a flower or bulb crop that was maybe export orientated eg. Peonies.

As we all know, Money does not grow on trees, & Rome certainly was not built in a day.....

I moved into this house 2 ½ years ago , with just one bedroom finished downstairs ,an office, a kitchen & a bathroom. The house has gradually been finished as time & money permit. I still have an unfinished driveway, a garden shed in the paddock with only the floor slab completed & lots of ideas out the back to implement. However my dream has not gone away.

My husband & I split up after more than 27years together, nearly half of this time being spent living in a rural situation. I was just so delighted to think that I had managed to purchase a small rural patch of my own. I resent that the CCC. ,for no just reason other than the obvious revenue collection issue, may be able to change the designated way the rating of my block is done, from rural to residential. To pay this increase, could well be out of my reach in the future. I mean to strongly opposed the changes proposed, unless these are accompanied with some sort of compensation (ie) say future subdivision possibilities. However, this not why I brought my block. I brought it as rural land, I have payed rates on it as rural land since I have owned it . No improvements or any additional services have been provided by the council since I have owned it , as I wish to argue below.

The definition of rural in relation to “land within the sewered area”

Firstly I would like to submit that the differential rating for section B – residential and other properties, specifically (b) – “the land within the sewered area”, should exclude rural properties which otherwise meets all the definition of section C – “Rural Properties”, as does my property.

At the time when my property was developed it was designated as rural .This is what I brought & have payed rates on.. As a condition of the development under the Christchurch City Council District Plan and a Christchurch City Council (CCC) requirement for this site I had to provide my own system (as opposed to the developer), as the CCC would not provide a sewage connection to our individual properties. At that time the rationale and justification was that as it was a rural property, this was not the responsibility of the CCC.

At the time of consent for the development of my property (Lot 11) the sewage connection was already on Springs Road. Since this time nothing has been changed or been added & no additional sewage benefit or

systems have been made available to us since this development was established in early 1990.

At considerable expense to myself, I had to put in a macerator pump, & holding tank , to be able to successfully use the council's sewer system on Springs Rd.

Because this was the requirement and condition set down by the CCC, the individual households have provided all additional services and the ongoing maintenance is also met by the individual households. As such I can see no rational justification or additional benefit to us that would justify that a designation change from "Rural" to Residential" can be made in regard to this particular proposal.

The definition of rural land in relation to additional services

I also submit that other services provided to ratepayers should be a consideration when the definition of "rural" and or "residential" is decided upon.

For example my property has:

- No footpaths.
- No curbing and channeling or is linked to the Christchurch City Council (CCC) storm water system (each property has to provide a soak pit to meet the requirements of a rural property)
- No road maintenance
- No CCC street lighting in Busch Lane
- No mains water pressure (I had to provide a water tank and water pump for the provision of household water plus yearly maintenance and operating costs)
- No refuse collection provided in Busch Lane itself.
- No maintenance of road sides, trees, and signage by the CCC or City Care

Added to this we have:

- Rural mail delivery

- No right to subdivide the land to 1000 sqm consistent with a residential determination
- A requirement to maintain the “green belt” concept of this rural property

The CCC gave consent for our development to proceed, on the basis that lots were a minimum size of 2 hectares, that all shelterbelts were retained, that the properties could not be subdivided and that they were for horticultural use.

I do not accept the proposed CCC Draft Community Plan on the basis that the property be redesignated residential, when the proposed plan only changes one criteria, that we are now “land within the sewer area “ without all other conditions and advantages to residential properties available also to us (as outlined above).

The definition process and rationale.

I also suggest that your system of identifying properties, which you propose to re-designate from Rural to residential to be considerably flawed.

In your letter, you state that this assessment was made from an aerial photograph. I understand that these were taken 3 to 5 years ago and shows just bare land. My house has been on our site since building began in March 2001.

We know the CCC is willing to make inspections, and had you done so you would have found the house is bordered by apple trees, Three neighbours are grazing cattle, two of which have substantial yards, one also runs horses, the other has an established peony plot, whilst the 3rd is intending to further develop his interests in major flower growing ventures, already in operation on other properties owned by him. Directly across the laneway from me another neighbour is developing a saffron plot You would hardly term this residential only territory.

It seems to me that the major aim of your proposal appears to be that you want to change the designation of land from rural to residential based solely on the concept of "sewage area" regardless of what conditions have gone before, or what the actual land is used for and the context in which this activity takes place .

Your letter to me states that even though our property may be outside of the "serviced areas for sewerage and water", it is proposed that this now will no longer be a consideration for attracting a rural differential.

This submission is that nothing has change in any way (either significant, or minor), to justify a change in the rural definition.

In fact it has been pointed out to me that the sole argument that the CCC is making relates to a change in semantics as opposed to any substantive material change, and it would appear that your intent in relation to the concept of "serviced area for sewerage and water" is at odds with your own definitions on the "Extract on the Differential System- Section C" (on the back of the letter) which says that it is the use of the property which is the determining factor.

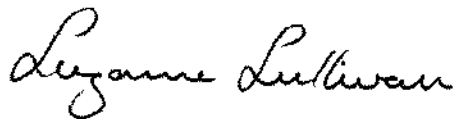
It would thus appear that the intent of this proposal is not concerned to clearly identify land use and define land use in a consistent way. It is my view & also the view of many others in our rural subdivision that this proposal is aimed at increasing the rate revenue from households without any attempt to provide us with the same level of service and advantages as all ratepayers in the CCC District. At best this is really a crude way to collect higher rates and at worst a clear case of discrimination.

I purchased a rural property in good faith, expecting to have to pay for services that would not be provided by the CCC. To now find that this proposal would require me to pay about \$400-\$600 more a year on top of the cost associated to my rural property, is not acceptable. For any such change in definition there should be a commensurate level of services offered and I would expect compensation to the current property owners who have accepted the conditions imposed on them by the CCC in good faith, like me, when they purchased their rural property.

**I intend to fight this new draft proposal. I do not see why the CCC.
Should presume that they can just change the rules to suit themselves.**

**Thankyou for reading & considering my submission. If possible I would
like the opportunity to discuss this in person.**

**Suzanne Sullivan
Landscape Consultant**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Sullivan". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.