

5. **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – DELIBERATIONS
CANTERBURY PLAINS IRRIGATION/WATER USE ISSUES**

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Roger Cave, Community Secretary DDI 372 2502
Corporate Plan Output: Riccarton/Wigram Community Board Vol 1 3.2 Text 6	

At the May meeting of the Environment Committee, elected members and staff from Environment Canterbury joined in the discussion on the (Environment Canterbury) draft annual plan and long-term financial strategy discussion documents.

With the increasing conversion of arible farmland to dairy farming, coupled with the prolonged regional drought, and the proposal to irrigate the Canterbury Plains there were concerns raised (by our members) about the impact that these activities would have on the natural water resources and the possibility of acquifer contamination.

A working party (of Alison Wilkie, David Buist, Mike Mora, together with Martin Maguire) has met on a couple of occasions to talk about the issue.

Members may also be aware of proposals being talked up by the Central Plains Steering Committee and the Ashburton Community Water Trust on their studies which are centred on the use of water from the Rakaia River.

As part of this Board's continuing interest, Alan Watson (Infrastructure Policy Leader) and Richard Budd (Environment Canterbury Councillor) has been invited along to today's meeting to discuss these projects, and the broader issue of Canterbury "water" usage.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the information be received.