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CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Draft LTCCP 2009-19

- Received via Web

Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Monday 11 May 2009 and Monday 18 May 2009.

Are you completing this submission:

On behalf of a group or organisation

If you are representing, how many people do you represent?

50+

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Date:

15 April 2009

Your Submission:

We wish the Council to consider offering a low-pressure reticulated water supply to Purau. This would achieve health benefits.

Submission on the LTCCP 2009-2019

Prepared April 2009 by Howard Williams on behalf of both Purau Residents Association and Uniquely Purau Society Incorporated (UPSI)

Introduction

This submission includes issues already submitted to the Council. My experience on matters relating to water supply include employment by Pattle Delamore Partners as a consultant on public water supply matters for Christchurch City Council (2002-2005). In addition, I am currently employed by Canterbury Regional Council as a Groundwater Resources Scientist. Any views in this submission are those of Purau Residents' Association and UPSI and are not to be construed as being from my current and past employers.

1. Residents of Purau do not currently enjoy the benefits of a reticulated water supply despite having been promised it for some time. We understand that the issue received insufficient priority to get into the next ten year period of the LTCCP.

2. Recent proposals for subdivision of rural land on the western face of Mt Evans have indicated that a low pressure supply might be forthcoming via Diamond Harbour for the seven dwellings proposed. That a small number of new residents might benefit by having reticulated water, while existing residents would continue to have none, despite the pipe work passing their properties is nothing short of an insult to their patience in light of continued

setbacks to the provision of reticulated water.

3. It seems to us that if water is to be brought to the community, with the acquiescence of the Council, then it should be done once, for all that want it, considering the excavation and transport upheaval involved and the additional costs of undertaking it in a staged fashion.

4. We understand and support the public health argument that a water supply should be accompanied by a suitable wastewater disposal system. However, there is no need, and probably little desire for a fully-fledged high pressure system in this community. All that is required is a low pressure supply for when rainfall or spring supply is insufficient. Such a system would not necessarily involve any substantial increase in the usage of water. Well-maintained existing wastewater systems ought to be able to cope with such a regime and remain compliant.

5. We call your attention to the fact that some wastewater systems are clearly failing now, without the benefit of a reticulated water supply. Regular water quality analyses undertaken during summer months at the mouth of the Purau Stream exhibit the common occurrence of peaks in pathogen detection on the beach (this summer: > 2000 CFU/100 mL) even during months of minimal rainfall, when declining river flows indicated no surface runoff. An explanation for the exceedances of the contact recreational guidelines is seepage from septic systems. Data from samples collected in Purau Stream are shown in Figure 2. The Council will be aware that the sampling site is a favoured bathing and paddling location for the many hundreds of families that use the beach and camping ground. I present these analyses, representing the last ten years' monitoring at the beach sampling site (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Plots of Enterococci concentrations from Environment Canterbury website (not copied in this form)

Figure 2: Plot of E. coli concentrations from Purau Stream 2008-9
Alert level for a single sample > 550 E. coli /100 mL (not copied on this form)

6. In Figure 1, the analyses do not consistently breach the trigger level (red line) with the result that no warnings are issued, they commonly breach the alert value of 140 CFU/100 mL during the summer. In Figure 2, the holiday period of November to January shows very high values, considerably in excess of the 550 MPN/100 mL trigger level.

7. It is our opinion, that rather than connect Purau to an existing wastewater disposal scheme (e.g. Diamond Harbour), an expensive option, it is sensible to provide a different, cheaper and more sustainable solution. We suggest that those that want connection to reticulated water opt to upgrade their wastewater disposal systems to a satisfactory standard. We envisage the provision of a repayable loan to residents to achieve this.

8. A number of residents of Purau wish to register their disappointment that the Council seems to be ignoring our need, especially along the shore, where there is no access to spring or surface water. Some residents were told on buying their properties over a decade ago that a water supply would be installed within 5 years. Since then, it just gets pushed a little further and further away. Some have been saying "Oh, we'll hang in there a couple more years". It appears from the LTCCP that it will now be at least another decade before water comes to Purau, except for the lucky seven.

9. For some, the water issue may force them to leave the community, the costs of maintaining their roof water supply (e.g. filtration, gutter maintenance, tank cleaning) and the vagaries of the climate mean that some are spending large sums on trucking water in and we have no guarantee that the transportation service will continue. Many beach front properties are simple baches, but they are all used with much more regularity than they

were a few years ago, so the health issues will likely increase.

10. Not all of the landowners at Purau want reticulated water; some have spent large sums creating or maintaining an independence from such a system. They are proud to collect rainwater, proud to recycle water, treat it sufficiently for it to be used on their crops. We recommend to the Council that all users of water in Christchurch should use rainwater for their gardens, perhaps, like Auckland and Kapiti, encourage the use of rainwater in toilet cisterns.

11. The residents of Purau support the recycling of water, education of Christchurch residents to promote greater care in the use of water "we daily practice what we preach" we value the small resource that we have.

12. Section 125 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires assessment of water and other sanitary services. If provision of services to a small portion of the population is envisaged, then fairness requires that the entire population should be considered.

13. Section 126 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires an assessment of any risks to the community relating to the absence in any area of either a water supply or a reticulated wastewater service or both. Has such an assessment been undertaken? If it has, what were the results? If it has not, then how can the provision of services to only a small section of the community be justified?

14. The 13th Schedule of the Local Government Act 2002 contains statements about the Methodology for relating cost of community facilities to units of demand. What assessment has been undertaken to cost the provision of water services to seven households in Purau, and to what extent is this provision at sole cost to the developer? If there is a contribution from the Council, what was the basis for that contribution and how does it satisfy the requirements of section 126?

15. In conclusion, I believe the community at Purau deserves answers to these questions:

• Will it be a health issue such as the one I have presented that will change the Council's position about funding a community supply?

• How does the Council decide, within an individual community, who should get water, and who not?