

Submission on Proposed Plan Change 19 – Central Otago District Council

To: Chief Executive, Central Otago District Council, PO Box 122, Alexandra, districtplan@codc.govt.nz

Name of Submitter: Julene Anderson

Introduction

My husband and I live in the area north of SH8B in Cromwell (currently known as RRA6) and absolutely love the special character this area has, its openness, access to the lake, with good quality low density housing, and quiet streets. We bought here in 2018, partly because the District Plan gave property owners protection from allowing the ad hoc subdividing of the minimum 4000 sqm size blocks into smaller sections which would allow as many neighbouring houses to be squeezed onto the land as possible. It was the only area close to Cromwell that allowed and protected these larger sections and although it was not an 'affordable' option, but we saved hard to buy it and now really enjoy living here.

I have had some difficulty in understanding what PC19 proposes for Cromwell's RRA6. For the first week after notification of the Plan Change, there were no accessible PC19 GIS maps available to the public. Even when they finally became publicly available, if you weren't familiar in how to use a GIS mapping tool, there were no instructions on how to find out how to navigate the PC19 GIS maps, i.e. where Precincts 1,2 and 3 were located, and how to find your own property and to then zoom in to find the writing on the map which stated if you were in a Large Lot, Low Density or Medium density zone. The Council appointed Consultant was however very helpful at a drop-in session with the provision of suitable maps. It was also confusing to read on Page 1 of the Residential Chapter Provisions – Primary Changes a reference to **all** of RRA6 becoming a single Large Lot Residential, yet the PC19 GIS maps showing that there were proposing to be 2 different zones within RRA6.

The specific provisions of the application for proposed Plan Change 19 (PC19) that my submission relates to are:

1. The Re-classification and Split of RRA6 into Large Lot Residential Zone and Low Density Residential Zone

In the s32 report there have been no valid or rational reasons given as to why RRA6 has been arbitrarily split into 2 different zones. All Council has said is "rezoning part of RRA6 as LDRZ is inappropriate due the (sic) proximity of the nohoanga site and recreational use of the lakefront and LLRZ is proposed"

However, the existence and closeness of the nohoanga site was never mentioned in the Cromwell Master Plan nor the Spatial Plan. Nor did the Spatial Plan propose dividing RRA6 into 2 different zones. It seems to be a compromise decision made by Council at the last minute.

a. Nohoanga Site

With specific reference to the nohoanga site, the closest proposed LLRZ site is approximately 300-400m away from the nohoanga entitlement at McNulty Point. The site itself, although not in the original location due to the flooding of the Clutha/Matau River, is approximately 6,700 sqm, located at the eastern end of the point above the McNulty Inlet boat club. It currently consists of car tracks and a well used skid pad, dumped rubbish, rabbit holes, rabbits, pyres of dead pines and the occasional stand of pine and poplar trees. There are no defined boundary lines to protect the site and no signage explaining its purpose or cultural significance to Kai Tahu.

Council's Consultant Planner had noted in the 2021 Aurum subdivision application report that under the Settlement Act, nohoanga entitlements are specific areas of Crown owned land adjacent to lakeshores or

riverbanks that allow Kāi Tahu whānui (tribal members) the temporary, but exclusive, rights to occupy. Nohoanga may be used up to 210 days a year between mid-August and the end of April and provides all Kāi Tahu whānui with an opportunity to experience the landscape as their tūpuna did, and to rekindle the traditional practices of gathering food and other natural resources.

When the proposed subdivision to undertake a thirty-two lot subdivision was applied for in August 2021 by Aurum Wines Ltd and the Lawrence Family Trust Partnership, Kā Rūnaka's submission was concerned about inappropriate subdivision and development which might have adverse effects on the environment or sites of cultural significance to Kāi Tahu

Kā Rūnaka also submitted that the subdivision would alter the natural elements of the Lake Dunstan catchment and have a very real potential to undermine the role of Kā Rūnaka as rakatira and kaitiaki of all natural resources. The same concerns of Kā Rūnaka regarding the Aurum Wines application will also apply to PC19 and include the potential effects on air quality due to discharge from log burners, stormwater disposal, water demand, the effects of earthworks and the effects of intensification on access to and usability of the nohoanga.

All these potential effects are just as concerning to the current residents of RRA6 and apply to the subdivision of 4000 sqm sections down to 2000 sqm and 500 sqm respectively.

In addition, it was noted that Kā Rūnaka considered that the overall form of the subdivision development appeared to undermine the integrity of the district plan and should the Aurum application be granted, it could raise expectations of other applicants seeking similar intensification within this zone and they sought that the application be declined as currently proposed.

Aurum Wines choose to withdraw their application on 28 January 2022 before proceeding to a hearing.

Regarding the proposed division of RRA6 into 2 zones, I cannot understand how a property which is approximately 1.2 km distance from the nohoanga site (1 Bell Avenue), is more worthy of a minimum 2000 sqm than my property which is only 576 metres distant and is proposed to be subdividable down to 500 sqm.

b. Recreational Use of the Lakefront

The further argument about needing to keep bigger sections at 2000 sqm for the 'recreational use of the lakefront' is also misleading and wrong as, for example, a property at 90 Luggate-Cromwell Road with no access to the lake, is 647 metres in a straight line from the McNulty Inlet Aquatic Centre, and is proposed to be zoned to 2000 sqm whereas I am only 361 metres from the lake and could be surrounded by subdivided sections down to 500 sqm in size.

I also confused as to how 'recreational use of the lake front' should even be considered as a reason for dividing up RRA6 into 2 separate areas. Access to the lake front surely is not dependant on having to shield one's eyes from the houses built closest to the lake (parts of Bell Ave, parts of Stout Terrace, parts of Lakeview Terrace) which can only be seen from the walking and cycle trail, or from a boat.

The use of street and road boundaries to determine different zones leads to major anomalies and strengthens my submission to keep the whole RRA6 area to a minimum size of 4000 sqm.

c. Land Zone Swaps

CODC seems to have made a deal regarding the quantity of LLRZ and LDRZ sections in RRA6 by agreeing with a private land owner to do a land swap, i.e. keep Kā Rūnaka happy re their nohoanga site by only proposing 2000 sqm minimum instead of 500 sqm in some parts of RRA6, and instead extend the Medium Density zone for this private owner for his land located adjacent to Waenga Drive. This proposal apparently balances the loss of smaller LDRZ sections in one area to allowing much smaller (200sqm)

sections in another area. (Clause 6 of the s32 report). Does this mean that without the land zone swap, all of RRA6 would have been LDRZ?

This ability to allow private landowners to request a swap of property they legally own between different zonings should apply to all property owners, not a select few who hold large land holdings.

I submit that the proposed zone boundary lines within RRA6 should be completely disregarded as they make absolutely no sense, and are all over the place, including dividing Bell Ave completely in half. Instead, the whole RRA6 area needs to be retained as 4000 sqm minimum size and a new Precinct 4 created to protect it, as it is proposed to be done for Lowburn (protecting 3000 sqm minimum size) and Old Golf Course Road in Alexandra (minimum 6000 sqm).

2. Quantity of Proposed Sections

Although requested during the submission period, Council has been unable to provide me with the numbers of proposed 2000 and 500 sqm sections that could be made available within the RRA6 boundary, if PC19 is allowed. The Wooing Tree subdivision is meant to be providing somewhere between 200 and 300 sections, depending on whose report you read (ODT, Council, Wooing Tree website or the EPA decision.)

The Spatial Plan at pg. 28 referred to an estimated population increase from 7750 in 2018 to 12,150 in 2048. At pg. 29 it estimated, for North Cromwell (not including the Wooing Tree Estate) that currently there are 10 – 15 dwellings per hectare, and by subdividing the whole area, there possible yield is 150 – 225 dwellings per hectare. That is a massive jump in numbers of dwellings and their resulting intensification of RRA6. These figures do not extrapolate easily when determining what proposed size sections relate to this estimated yield, (2000 or 500 sqm) and whether they considered that proposed 500 sqm sections can have, as a permitted activity, 2 residential units on them.

My own aerial count from Council's GIS mapping system of RRA6 currently yields approximately 108 sections of the minimum size of 4000 sqm (not including Wooing Tree or Lakeside Estate). I note that the possible yield of subdividing Council's land that is currently only used by golfers (and is closed to the public for recreation) would be between 510 and 680 residential dwellings.

Surely better and more robust and up to date numbers should have been provided with the application. What is our current population now, are the projections still on track, how many of each proposed size section would be realised in RRA6 if PC19 goes ahead? The Spatial Plan proposing these zones is already nearly 4 years out of date.

Within the Spatial Plan at pg.28 was reference to the "Cromwell Housing and Business Capacity Assessment" written by Rationale, which indicated that 'there already is sufficient capacity to meet the demand for housing out to 2048, including within the town centre and nearby locations'.

Adding to the unknown total amount of sections that could be available if PC19 is approved, is the recent Plan Change 14 (Shannon Farm) that has recently been approved by the Environment Court following mediation. This has resulted in a 160 lot subdivision being given approval. To quote from Crux.org.nz on August 19th 2022:

"Cromwell Community Board chair Anna Harrison says the outcome of the mediation is a significant development not anticipated by the Cromwell Spatial Plan. The spatial plan was signed off after extensive community consultation on what land across the town should be earmarked for development in the next three decades.

But in a community welcoming new residents seemingly by the day, with housing pressures well-documented, fresh land for residential development, especially in lifestyle blocks, is a desirable thing. "The court decision provides a positive outcome as it presents a range of additional residential opportunities for the Cromwell community," Mrs Harrison says.

PC14 now allows 53 lots of 2000 sqm, 25 lots of 3000 sqm and 33 lots of 4000 sqm with the remainder being lots between 1 and 4 ha size. If large lots of 4000 sqm are obviously feasible and desirable, then

those within RRA6 should be left as they are and not be able to be subdivided via PC19. An underpass is to be built by the developers at the end of Ripponvale Road under SH6 to ensure that the all important “connectivity” to town is safely maintained.

3. Quality of Proposed 500 sqm sections within RRA6 (LDRZ)

Proposed Rule LRZ-R1 allows, as a permitted activity, 2 residential units per site, and as long as there is reticulated sewage, then these 2 units can be built on a 500 sqm site. (LRZ-S1). This means on a an empty 4000 sqm section in RRA6, within LDRZ, up to 16 residential units could be built, without needing a resource consent and possibly without even the nearest neighbours being informed. If this is allowed to happen then the LDRZ within RRA6 would become akin to a modern day ghetto and is not what we ever anticipated or expected from this Plan Change. Because of the open character of RRA6, I strongly oppose this being allowed to happen. If this is allowed it can never be undone.

4. Affordability of Proposed Sections

A 700 sqm section went for sale in Fraser Court (RRA6) in August 2017 for \$315,000. With a house on it, it is now estimated to be worth between \$1.12 and \$1.24 million dollars, (Homes.co.nz). In 2020, a 4000 sqm section on Thelma Place (RRA6) sold for \$640,000. (Homes.co.nz). Within the Wooing Tree Estate, a 501 sqm section on Blondie Drive sold for \$480,000 in February 2022. (Homes.co.nz).

Subdividing RRA 6 into such small sections will not assist in helping people into “affordable homes” at all, given the price of just a 500 sqm section in this area. An affordable home is only affordable first time around.

5. National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NP-SUD)

Clause 24 of the S32 Evaluation Report, notes that because Cromwell’s urban population is well short of the 10,000 people threshold, the proposed provisions in PC19 are not ‘strictly required’ to give effect to the NP-USD. However, Council wishes to align PC19 to the Residential Zones as much as possible with the NPS-UD for when the day comes that our population reaches 10,000. Clause 24 notes that rezoning RRA 6 will not meet Objective 2 of the NP-SUD – to improve housing affordability by supporting competitive land and development markets, and by providing sufficient development capacity to meet the demand over the short, medium and long term. So why do it when there are other more suitable locations closer to town, such as the Golf Course, Freeway Orchard, and Gair Estate?

6. Spatial Plan Objectives

At pg. 23 of the SP, Objective 2 is to have “Growth focussed within existing Cromwell”. This was accompanied by a map on pg. 37 which gave an outline of a preferred area to keep the higher density growth within a boundary of 800 metres from the town centre. This was shown by a circle which stopped short south of the east-west length of Shortcut Road, and also discussed an appropriate guide for higher density growth areas as being within a 400 – 800 metre walk of the town centre, which should take 5 – 10 minutes.

Of course, there are no straight lines of access to the town from within the circle, and to walk to the town mall from my home is actually 1.1 km and took 14 minutes while walking briskly. So RRA6 is clearly outside the proposed higher 500 sqm density growth recommended in the SP and should not be included in the proposed LDRZ.

7. Insufficient Assessment of Environmental Effects within the S32 Evaluation Report

Although not a requirement of a Plan Change to present an AEE, I refer specifically (but not exclusively) to the lack of attention given to the environmental and adverse effects of PC19 with an increase in noise, traffic movements, and the loss of the amenity value of the RRA6 area. Excluding the Wooing Tree Estate, the RRA area currently has very little night lighting, and only 3 formed footpaths on one side of the road

(Partridge Road, Stout Terrace, Lakeview Terrace and small lengths in 2 places along one side of Shortcut Rd). Apart from Shortcut Road, every street, drive, terrace, place and road in RRA6 is a cul-de-sac. Unfortunately, there is also a very dangerous intersection at Shortcut Rd, Lakeview Terrace and Partridge Road. (1 fatality and 1 serious hit and run accident and several minor collisions). Allowing an unknown quantity of sections to be developed is the antithesis of what the special character of this area is all about. I don't want more vehicles and traffic movements, more buildings, more lighting and much more noise.

8. Insufficient Consideration Given to Addressing the Objectives and Policies in the Central Otago District Plan concerning RRA6, and specifically (but not exclusively) Objective 7.1.1 Maintenance of Residential Character and Policy 7.2.1. to Policy 7.2.7 Residential Character and Amenity

Currently, Council is required to uphold its own Plan which states, inter alia, maintaining and enhancing the built character and amenity values of a Residential Resource Area. I am very concerned that if PC19 is approved the special character of this area will be lost forever. This PC19 application is repugnant to the overall objectives and policies of the current District Plan to protect this area. It proposes changing our current character and amenity value to one of:

- Containing predominantly low rise and detached residential units
- Maintaining a *good* level of openness around buildings
- Providing *good* quality on-site amenity and maintaining the anticipated amenity values of adjacent sites; and
- Is well designed and well connected into surrounding area

Italics are mine. Cf LRZ-O2.

Summary

I oppose PC19 as it relates to RRA6 and request the Hearing Commissioners to consider reclassifying the whole area of RRA6 to a new Precinct 4, and to retain the minimum lot size of 4000 sqm. (In addition to and for the same reasons as outlined in LLRZ-P7, LRZ-P4 and add to LLRZ-S1)

I oppose the proposal to allow minor dwellings to be built on 4000 sqm sections. (LLRZ-R2 and LRZ-R2)

I oppose allowing provision for Retirement Villages within RRA6, especially as there is no connection at all to commercial areas and community facilities (LLRZ-P4 and LRZ-P4) Retirement villages in RRA6 are just another form of intensive subdivision and are better placed closer to the town centre.

I oppose subdivision applications being controlled activities in RRA6 if they are for less than the permitted 4000 sqm. (SUB-O1, SUB-P1, SUB-R1, SUB-R4 and SUB-S1) and request new Precinct 4 be added – “The minimum size of any allotment shall be no less than 4000sqm”.

I do wish to be heard and request Council give consideration to holding the hearing in Cromwell if possible.

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