

Submission

On behalf of Marg and Gerrard Eckhoff

236 A Letts Gully

Alexandra

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Submission to the Central District Council on Plan Change : 14 Shannon Farm

requested by New Zealand Cherry Corp (Leyser)LP Limited

Preamble

We have lived at Letts Gully (Alexandra) for seven (7) years

We now have a new immediate neighbour -Leaning Rock Cherries (LRC) who recently purchased a block of land between us and their existing orchard. The land which was on the market for a long time was apparently unsalable to all but LRC due to the noise generated by LRC using bird scarers and latterly - frost fans

Our submission is therefore based on actual and practical experience of co -existence between cherry growing and housing developments.

We point out that noise generated which travels beyond the boundary of the person or industry who generates such noise is a genuine “*pollution of the commons*” Please note the social attitudes towards pollution of water-ways. Stringent controls are being retrospectively applied to management of this aspect of the commons. The air is also part of “the commons”

As former farmers of 40 plus years’ experience we accept that rural noise occurs as part of rural life. We also accept that mitigation of noise is the responsibility of those who are responsible for the noise. Reverse sensitivity is often used as an excuse for outdated practices. Reverse sensitivity therefore captures the economic value (by default) of all surrounding and impacted land. That is unacceptable. We point out **the RMA requires all of us to mitigate against environmental effects**. Noise pollution cannot be allowed to impact on the lives of others. We are each of us entitled to ‘quiet enjoyment’ of our properties.

Formal Submission

We (regrettably) oppose the concept that integrated housing developments and cherry growing are compatible. This is based on years of actual experience

Frost fans -*regardless of the number of blades*, generate noise levels that are completely unacceptable. Double glazed houses even at a distance of 300 metres cannot exclude the “wind slap”. Personal experience is applied here. Where a number of fans are operating, the accumulative effect of the noise is unbearable at a time (night) when sleep is so essential for ones physical and mental health. We cannot

stress the importance of reducing and preferably eliminating the use of frost fans where the audible nature is impacting on the wider public. The fans near us operate well before budburst; indeed they are even used after harvest which is completely unacceptable. We draw to your attention the report by NOVO GROUP 7th November 2019 commissioned by the CODC : **noise assessment addendum**.

Recommendation No frost fans can be operated where the singular and/or accumulated noise levels impact on neighboring housing where their (frost fan) noise can be heard inside a dwelling.

Bird scarers

No bird scaring devices should be allowed under any circumstances. Netting of Cherry trees is now standard practice by progressive orchardists which eliminates summer noise and fosters significant social harmony as a result. Orchard workers and pickers hearing must be impacted by high frequency bird scarers. The use of shot guns to kill birds allows for pellets to travel up to approximately 400 metres

No mist nets should be allowed as native birds are also caught. It should also be noted that the Chinese who purchase a lot of our fruit , believe birds carry wisdom . The cultural sensitivity around shooting birds is therefore a real issue.

Recommendation

All new cherry plantings must be covered by bird netting. All existing plantings of commercial cherry trees should be progressively netted.

Spray drift

Recommendation

No spray drift can be allowed. A buffer zone planted with trees should be grown to retain sprays within the property. Please note that orchard workers are compelled to wear fully protective breathing apparatus. Near neighbours are exposed to toxic chemicals. That must not happen.

While I am supportive of the development of the horticultural industry -it appears that some very inappropriate practices still occur . Comment in the application that appropriate management can control or mitigate sounds that disturb others is simply wrong. Whose management? Under what conditions? Whose value system is applied thru management, the orchard interests or the neighbours best interest?

We therefore oppose the application for a resource consent .

I/we wish to speak to the above submission

Sincerely Gerrard and Marg Eckhoff

8-12-2019