

[Redacted]

From: Otago Regional Council <notifications@engagementhq.com>
Sent: Monday, 4 May 2020 4:30 pm
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Anonymous User completed Submission Form – Proposed Water Permits Plan Change (Plan Change 7) to the Regional Plan: Water

Anonymous User just submitted the survey 'Submission Form – Proposed Water Permits Plan Change (Plan Change 7) to the Regional Plan: Water' with the responses below.

Full name of submitter

Hayden Hickey & Rachel Checketts

Name of organisation (if applicable)

WS Hickey & Son Ltd

Email

[Redacted]

Postal Address (or alternative method of contact)

[Redacted]

Phone number

[Redacted]

Do you wish to be heard in support of your submission?

(Being 'heard' means speaking at a hearing)

Yes

If others have made a similar submission, would you consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing?

Yes

Could you gain an advantage in trade competition from this submission?

No

Are you directly affected by an effect of the plan change that:

- a) adversely affects the environment; and
- b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition

I am

State what your submission relates to and if you support, oppose, or want it amended:

(e.g. support rule 'x', or amend policy 'y')

Oppose the plan change

State what decision you want the Otago Regional Council to make:

(e.g. amend policy 'y' to say....)

The ORC needs to make a clearer long term decision that is based on well informed scientific data and analysis.

Give reasons for the decision you want made:

(e.g. I want policy 'y' changed because...)

I am the owner of a local agri business (Wool Merchant) and have a small land holding with existing water rights where I also reside. Our wool business has been owned and operated by our family since 1956. We employ 6 full-time staff and 2 seasonal casual staff. In my opinion our business has remained viable while many others nationally have not because of our exceptional wool growing conditions in our area. This is a combination of the natural environment and the farmers who produce here. A major part of this recipe is the ability to irrigate land and provide balance to an otherwise unforgiving (at times) summer. For our 'low margin, high turnover' business model to function successfully numbers of sheep in the area need to be retained if not lifted. We have already seen large numbers of sheep disappear from the area to to change in land use. This issue is not specific to our area. Our busy season is June-October for pre-lamb shearing. To retain skilled staff we need to be working 12 months of the year. Finishing of lambs in the area (generally on irrigated land) fills the void from January until May. Depending on the irrigation rules it would be anyones guess how many lambs ended up being finished in our area in a dry year. I predict most farmers would sell as store lambs sending a significant amount of any meat profit as well as the wool to be harvested to another irrigated (or wetter) area. I would probably cut our full time staff by at least half and rely on seasonal staff to get by. Retaining skilled seasonal staff would be a major challenge as would the viability of the overall business. I purchased 20 hectares of land near Omakau from my Grandfather in 2012 with the intention to build a dwelling and reside. I decided to hold off on the build due to the uncertainty over water at the time. 8 years later I feel we are less certain than back then. The land was historically flood irrigated and I continued to do this successfully until 2017. Due to ORC rules I have spent considerable money investing in an irrigation dam, pump and K-line irrigation (approx \$30 000). I now burn diesel rather than let gravity irrigate the land. This is something I am not particularly proud of. My area is small but am sure the numbers proportionally are not dissimilar to a lot of other farmers who have invested in irrigation to conform with the new rules. Should the quota volume of water be reduced significantly, this infrastructure (which is already marginal at best in my personal situation) would be obsolete. The value of the land would be much less than my purchase price. Sending me into negative equity. I am a small example of what would be a huge issue for this valley under proposed ORC water rules. The ORC needs to make a long term decision to provide certainty to landowners and business. This needs to be based on robust science and data. In my opinion considerable money and time has already been wasted and we are falling further behind.