

25 May 2017

Carl Ross Palmer
Sharon Denise Oxley
161 Cemetery Road
Lake Hawea

Valuation No. 29082-03978

Dear Commissioners:

Please consider the following comments regarding Hearing Stream 12 re-zoning requests.

As background, please note we have read the 2020 Community Plan written in 2003. Based on this, we bought our house believing that rezoning would occur. We purchased our property in 2008.

First, we'd like to address a number of particular points in the rebuttal evidence dated 5 May 2017 that we believe are either factually incorrect or misleading:

1) Part 7.2 of the rebuttal states "that while I support higher density within this area to avoid sprawl, infill development along the Sam John Place and Grandview Road area is not supported."

I and a number of other people affected by this proposal do not live on either of these roads, so the issues he raises aren't relevant to us, so it therefore is an invalid rebuttal point that should be dismissed.

And to say that infill development is not supported? Not supported by what? By whom? This is both unclear and a false claim. Many of us do in fact support it.

2) Part 7.3 of the rebuttal states: "I consider that it would be difficult to develop the subject area comprehensively due to the land being held by multiple owners. The existing road network (being a series of cul-de-sacs) does not support a future road network that provides efficient movement or connections, or walking and cycling opportunities."

The first sentence does not make sense. No one is asking to develop the subject area comprehensively. Only some people would consider re-zoning, and it certainly wouldn't happen all at once.

The second sentence is also untrue. Many of us do not live on or drive on any of the cul-de-sacs. And the walking and cycling tracks are in place on Grand View and Cemetery Road. You couldn't possibly have more walking and cycling opportunities than we currently have in this area.

3) Regarding rebuttal point 7.4, items a, b and c:

(A) retaining the rural character of land surrounding the established settlements;
(b) respecting the surrounding landscape; and
(c) maintaining open vistas as viewed from the residential settlements.

I submit that, on an individual basis, many property owners could easily meet these criteria, and for anyone to draw a sweeping conclusion that this couldn't be achieved is patently false (and an insult to landscape architects everywhere!)

4) Rebuttal point 7.5 states "I do not consider the Council is obligated to upzone this land because it is indicated as a logical extension and urban limit in the Hawea 2020 document. I consider that the RRZ is appropriate in this area as it produces a low density urban form."

No one asked the council to be obligated. We are simply asking that, if certain criteria re met, that an application will be considered and approved or disapproved on its merits.

Secondly, if RRZ is appropriate for us, why is it not appropriate just a hundred metres away from us on the same side of Cemetery Road, all the way to Domain Road -this stretch of road is about to contain side-by-side homes for 1.5 kilometers. This is right next to RRZ. There's no break other than Grand View Road. The notion that our stretch of road eases people into the urban area is a nonsense. Most everyone who comes onto Cemetery Road first goes past Timsfield! That's not easing you into the development.

5) Rebuttal 7.6 is a restatement of a point he already made in 7.3, and therefore should be removed.

It's also not valid, as I pointed out.

6) Rebuttal 7.7 reads "Based on the above factors, I consider that the rezonings sought by the submitter would result in a continuation of the existing pattern of development (i.e. further cul-de-sac development and a lack of connection). I consider that higher, more urban densities and a hard urban edge would have been successful at this location if the original developments were better planned and connected and provided a coherent landscape buffer or edge along Muir and Cemetery Road."

Again, most of the area would not require cul-de-sacs. I'm not sure how this conclusion has been reached. We certainly wouldn't require one, and neither would our immediate neighbors all around us.

To address the second point, there would be no hard urban edge if many of us added another residence on our property. Mine wouldn't even be visible from the street, so I don't know what hard urban edge he's talking about.

And if a landscape buffer is preferred, I suggest he and others have a look at the property that borders my driveway to the west. It's a ramshackle lot filled with live and dead broom, fallen, dead pine trees and long grasses. It's a classic fire hazard, an eyesore and it's spreading weeds and wilding pines everywhere. But we digress...

7). Rebuttal 7.8 states that there are "adequate housing choices" in the area. Really? Houses on 1-acre lots can sell for nearly \$1million today. The new lots on Grandview sold in hours, many to investors. Does any of us really believe that an average working family can move out to Lake Hawea and pay \$600,000, never mind \$1million for a home?

The truth is, if the supply is constricted, prices will increase that much more. We should not discount simple economics.

8) Rebuttal point 7.9 cites "my supplementary evidence on housing capacity dated 1 May 2017 that confirms that there is adequate realisable capacity in the short, medium and long term, the dwelling capacity model includes the operative Lake Hawea Township Zone and the PDP Rural Residential Zones.

This research is flawed, because if you talk to any Real Estate broker, you'll find very, very slim pickings in terms of finished homes in Lake Hawea, unless of course you're in the market for a very expensive home. And even then, there aren't many.

9) Rebuttal point 7.10 takes issue with the supposition that upzoning would result in more competition, and says "however there is not any guarantee that these new sections would be brought to the market at the same time to facilitate competition."

I would argue that you don't need to have all or even most of the properties on the market to facilitate competition. Competition for buyers and sellers is a natural part of any market, and it certainly exists in Hawea.

As you may have noticed, we have addressed every single one of the rebuttal points. Not just a couple of them. Every single one. We believe this should send a strong signal regarding the veracity of this rebuttal, and the weight council should give to it when matched against the will of the people who actually live in this neighborhood.

We thank you for the opportunity to have our say, albeit it would have been better if this process had been run more openly from the start, which leads us to our next area of comment.

We have grave concerns about the process that was undertaken by the Hawea Community Association for gathering input.

- We were not engaged by them in any way.
- Our opinions were never sought.
- We were never notified of critical meetings where community input was sought.
- Hawea Community Association, it seems, just met, came up with their submission saying they did not agree with rezoning the rural residential land, and now here we are.

I'd suggest that the council looks into who this group actually represents, because they don't represent anyone we know.

We've come to discover, unfortunately, that there is the possibility that the entire process was skewed by a small group of Lake Hawea homeowners who seemingly want to close the gate now that they've got their piece of pie.

That's not right. That's not New Zealand.

Finally, we want to express our support for the statements being made today by Jude Battson. It would appear, based on her experience, that promises are not being kept, that long ago work was undertaken to accommodate subdividing 1 acre lots into two sections. But now this concept may be rejected. Quite unfairly, we would suggest.

Jude has made a number of compelling arguments that tell the entire story of the development of this neighborhood. We urge you all to take this history to heart.

Please also keep in mind this very simple truth: The more growth is restricted within the boundaries that currently define Lake Hawea, then the more our property, and many others in the community, will get further and further out of reach of the average home buyer.

This is not a policy that is either wise or sustainable.

One more thing, if staff is concerned about the 100KPH speed limit on the entirety of Cemetery Road, most of which will have development alongside it sooner rather than later, we'll back them on that one !!! Cemetery Road, by any safety measure, should have an 80KPH speed limit - today!