

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act
1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF applications by Central Plains Water
Trust to:

Canterbury Regional Council for
resource consents to take and use
water from the Waimakariri and
Rakaia Rivers and for all associated
consents required for the
construction and operation of the
Central Plains Water Enhancement
Scheme

Selwyn District Council for resource
consents to construct and operate
the Central Plains Water
Enhancement Scheme

AND

IN THE MATTER OF a notice of requirement by Central
Plains Water Limited to:

Selwyn District Council for the
designation of land for works
associated with the construction and
operation of the Central Plains
Water Enhancement Scheme

RESPONSE TO S42A OFFICER'S REPORT OF STEPHEN GORDON CHILES

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Introduction

1. My full name is Dr Stephen Gordon Chiles. My qualifications and experience, and the basis of this evidence, are set out in my previous brief of evidence prepared for this hearing. I have prepared this supplementary evidence to address issues raised in the section 42A report by Nick Boyes and Appendix C (Noise) to that report prepared by Dr Jeremy Trevathan.
2. I agree with the majority of comments made by Dr Trevathan in his report.
3. My involvement in this project started after the information reviewed by Dr Trevathan had been submitted. I was already aware of many issues raised by Dr Trevathan, and I have addressed these issues in my previous evidence.
4. Dr Trevathan has made comments relating to the existing noise environment. I disagree with Dr Trevathan about the importance of this information.

Operational noise

5. I agree with Dr Trevathan that more detailed consideration of all operational noise sources was required. I addressed this issue in paragraphs 31 to 39 of my previous evidence.
6. As stated in my previous evidence, and in proposed conditions, I confirm that all operational noise sources will be required to comply with noise limits from the Proposed Selwyn District Plan.

Construction noise

7. I agree with Dr Trevathan that noise from indicative methods of construction requires consideration. I have addressed this issue in paragraphs 15 to 30 of my previous brief of evidence.
8. It is important to remember that construction is temporary. As noted in New Zealand Standard NZS 6803:1999 even where construction noise may be undesirable this does not mean it is unreasonable. It is also important to note that in most locations construction noise will vary as different activities are undertaken at different times. For example, at Coalgate it is anticipated that noise levels would be significantly below the proposed limits for a substantial proportion of the overall construction period. Continuous construction noise over a prolonged period is not anticipated at any occupied dwellings.

9. I agree with Dr Trevathan that construction noise limits should explicitly apply to schools, and I have included this in the proposed conditions.
10. Construction noise limits proposed for this project have been taken directly from NZS 6803. It is stated in NZS 6803 that these are for construction noise received in residential zones and at dwellings in rural areas.
11. As noted in my previous evidence, I inspected the sites of the intake structures, headrace, pump stations, tunnelling work site and dam, as far as they could each be observed from public roads. In all locations I observed a rural environment with no particular acoustic features setting it apart from other rural environments. I therefore consider the NZS 6803 noise limits intended for dwellings in rural areas to be appropriate.
12. Dr Trevathan has commented on the need for information about the existing noise environment. Mr Boyes reports this as a “fundamental concern”, but this elevated status does not appear to be consistent with Dr Trevathan’s report.
13. Dr Trevathan quotes from a commentary in NZS 6803 which mentions existing background sound level. Dr Trevathan notes that existing levels could be useful to provide context to the noise limits. I consider that Dr Trevathan’s report misrepresents the relative status of the commentary and the substantive text of NZS 6803. Dr Trevathan correctly acknowledges that there is considerable precedent for the use of the NZS 6803 noise limits.

Conditions

14. Paragraph 121 of Mr Boyes’ report mentions buffer distances originally quoted in the application. I have refined the proposed controls for construction noise such that there is greater emphasis on the primary control being the noise limits in NZS 6803. Buffer distances are used as an aid to assessing whether these limits are likely to be achieved, but the buffer distances themselves are not proposed as a control. Likewise, where the night-time noise limit cannot practicably be achieved, construction activity would have to be conducted during the daytime only. Additional controls are not required in this instance. The use of the noise limits rather than prescriptive physical controls such as buffer distances allows the project to be constructed using the most efficient methods to control noise effects.
15. It has come to my attention that there are minor discrepancies between the outline of the Construction Noise Management Plan described in Mr

Lewthwaite's evidence and the proposed conditions in my previous evidence, which were also appended to Mr Tipler's evidence. The discrepancy relates to references to standards and the District Plan. With respect to construction noise there should not be a reference to the District Plan or NZS 6802. I confirm that the conditions in my previous evidence and Mr Tipler's evidence are correct.

Dr Stephen Chiles