

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

AND

IN THE MATTER of applications by the Central Plains Water Trust (CPWT) and the Ashburton Community Water Trust (ACWT)

Statement of Evidence of Louise Margaret Deans

1. My name is Louise Margaret Deans. This statement of evidence is on behalf of myself, my children and the Homebush Stables Historical Society.
2. My husband James, a descendant of William and John Deans, and I have been married for 38 years. We have four children and 5 grandchildren. We lived and worked in London from 1971-73. After that, James was seconded from his law office in London to Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf, as Legal Adviser to the Finance Minister of the Government of Bahrain. He was offered a position as a partner in the law firm in London but turned it down in order to take up the family offer to purchase the Homebush farm. We have lived at Homebush now for 32 years.
3. Homebush is located at 2042 Homebush Road, Darfield R.D.1. Our farm of 1350 acres, skirts around and over the Malvern Hills with the back boundary in the Waianiwaniwa Valley.



Homebush

4. 200 acres of the back of our farm will be flooded by the reservoir. As well as this, I believe a 100 metre wide channel bearing water from the Waimakariri River will cut right across the farm lengthways, making farming extremely difficult. Not only will our available farmland be reduced, but the water channel will make the daily business of farming very complex, wasting valuable time. The smell of the rotting vegetation in the reservoir every year will be disgusting.
5. In the past we have given land for the greater good of the community. In the 1990's James gave land for the new road at the Homebush Corner to remove a dangerous bend around the old Homebush School thus ensuring the safety of drivers. The farm is also used to place water tanks and pipes for the Malvern Hills Rural Water Scheme to run water to farms further down on the plains.
6. We have worked very hard over many years and through difficult economic times, to ensure that the farm will survive until the next generation. Previous generations of this family have also worked hard, sometimes against all odds when farming prices have been very low, as they are now, and when many other farmers have had to leave their farms through bankruptcy. We have both had to work very hard off the farm so that the farm will survive.



Trees on Homebush

7. Over this CPW scheme, James and I differ in our views. He views it as a "greater good" for which he is willing to sacrifice his ancestral land. I fail to understand what the greater good is when there is so much on the home front that is at stake. It may provide more employment; it will certainly put a lot more money into the pockets of the dairy farmers. Personally, we will have to cut down on employment and less money will be earned on this farm because we will have less land. Is it for the greater

good when land, which has been in the Deans family for 158 years, is taken out of our ownership by force, denying us as landowners, democratic choice? I am unable to see the point of view that the scheme is for the greater good of the land when it takes away a beautiful valley, pollutes the land, fouls the water supplies, and uses the land that we love inappropriately. It is an abuse of the land. The scheme is fouling not only our nest, but also desecrating the land in an unsustainable way. Not even the monetary figures make the scheme worthwhile.

THE HISTORY OF HOMEBUSH

8. The Deans brothers, William and John, had previously leased 33,000 acres of land from Ngai Tahu at Putaringamutu, now called Riccarton, from 1843. They farmed there very happily for seven years until the Canterbury Pilgrims Association purchased the land from the New Zealand Land Company.
9. As compensation for their loss, the Deans brothers took up the Homebush run which was the first leasehold land given by the Canterbury Land Association in 1851. The run comprised 33,000 acres and stretched from Springfield in the west to Waireka in the east, and from the southern bank of the Waimakariri River in the north, to the north bank of the Selwyn River in the south.
10. In 1851, just after they had taken up the Homebush run, William was drowned and his brother John returned to Scotland to marry his sweetheart Jane McIlraith.
11. John asked an old friend called Jimmy Robinson Clough to manage the Homebush Run while he was away. Jimmy was the first white settler in Canterbury, arriving in Akaroa in 1837 on a whaling ship. He married Puai who was of Ngai Tahu descent, the daughter of Iwikai, chief of the Onuku Marae and they had five children. When Jimmy came to Homebush in October 1851, he brought with him his two oldest sons, Abner and George. He wrote a very interesting diary for two years about his daily experiences at Homebush. That diary now resides in the Archives Room in the Canterbury Museum. Jimmy, George and Abner lived at Homebush until about 1856. There are significant landmarks in the hills named after Abner and Jimmy, Jimmy's Knob and Abner's Head in the Malvern Hills and Abner's Pool in the Waianiwaniwa River. It is believed that Abner and Jimmy lived in the Waianiwaniwa Valley, for there are distinctive traces of their habitation with the planting of fruit trees.

12. Jane and John Deans arrived in New Zealand in 1853 and Jane gave birth to a son called John shortly after her arrival. Her husband, John, died a few months later. Three of Jane's half-brothers came to New Zealand to help her with the farming. One of them, James McIlraith, managed the Homebush Run for nearly fifty years, purchasing the leased land as he could afford to. When Jane and John's son John grew up he married and had twelve children, nine of whom survived to adulthood.
13. In 1906, the New Zealand Government insisted that the large runs be divided so that more people could farm. Application was made to the Government seeking permission for the Homebush land to be divided amongst the siblings. Because of their unique circumstances, special permission was given by the government of the day to allow the Homebush land to be divided amongst seven of the children, including Marion who was the only surviving daughter. Her portion was the hills where the coal mines and the Homebush Pottery and Tile Works were built. Ian, the oldest took up the Kirkstyle farm, Bob Deans, the famous 1905 Originals All Black who scored the controversial try against Wales, lived on the Homebush farm and he died in 1908 at Homebush. He was succeeded by his brother James. Rowallan was farmed by Douglas, Sandown by William, and Morven by Alistair who died in the First World War leaving his widow with 2 sons, Austen and David.



Homebush entrance

14. The land has continued to be passed down the generations of the Deans family, each generation caring for the land and ensuring that the next generation will be able to survive increasingly difficult times for sheep and beef farming. It is an enormous responsibility in this day and age and one that is taken seriously by most of the families who farm their ancestral land. We all work very hard to survive and believe that it is not only in the interests of this significant family that the land is protected,

but for the future of the heritage of New Zealand.

THE HOMEBUSH BUILDINGS

15. From 1851, farm buildings were constructed to service a 33,000 acre farm. These buildings remain clustered on the Homebush farm.
16. There are eight buildings and structures which are classified by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, in both Category 1 and Category 2. The buildings in Category 1 include a 20 stand woolshed, built in 1879 and the Stables Building built in 1870 and extended in 1879 to incorporate a huge water turbine made in Dayton Ohio with a patent date of 1863. This turbine is unique in the western world and is still in working order thanks to the interest of local engineers. Buildings in Category 2 include the shearers' quarters behind the woolshed which housed 20 shearers, the brick dip, the pigsties, built in 1870, the applehouse, built in 1870, the house and a roman brick bridge.



The Woolshed

17. There are 2 further applications for classification with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, one for a labourer's cottage built about 1853, and an application for designation as an historic area.

THE HOMEBUSH STABLES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

18. The Homebush Stables Historical Society was established in 1992 with the aim of restoring, maintaining and protecting the Homebush Stables Building which was built in 1870 and extended in 1879. The Society has not only restored the building and kept it in good order, but it has also built up a museum which contains memorabilia not only from the Deans

family but also from the surrounding districts. It has become the district repository for heritage items. To enhance the visitors' experience, there is a restaurant and a craft-shop. Visitors are taken for a walk around the eight acre garden and a local historian tells them about the history of the family and the role that the family played in the establishment of Canterbury.



The Stables

19. The old pigsties, adjacent to the Stables building, are also classified by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and are in the process of restoration with assistance from the Heritage Fund of the Selwyn District Council.
20. Thousands of visitors come every year to see Homebush, to admire the beautiful old brick buildings, to visit the museum, to have a meal or a cup of tea, to see the magnificent trees which have been planted from 1850 and to learn some of the history of New Zealand. Many international visitors say that it is the highlight of their tour in New Zealand.
21. The Society is a good employer of local people. John Creamer from Darfield is the curator of the museum and he has his team of people who work with him. Bruce Leeming from Coalgate shears a sheep and works his dog Kuri around a small flock of sheep. Chris Fehney from Aylesbury sub-leases the shop from the Society, and has her team of helpers, Country Feasts from Burnham, do all of the catering and employ local people. Janet Taege from Darfield cleans the loos and does the flowers. Colin Watson from Sandy Knolls is our historian and storyteller and I do the over-all management and organisation and the gardening. All told we employ, on a casual basis, about 23 people. We also have a strong base of volunteers.

22. Over 16 years the Society has demonstrated that the heritage of New Zealand is a powerful pull both for local and international visitors.

23. The putrid smell of rotting vegetation every year from the draining of the reservoir will be a serious deterrent to a business which has been established for many years.

PLANS UNDERWAY FOR THE FUTURE

24. There are plans under way for the development of the Homebush Corner as part of the visitor experience, along the Scenic Inland Route Highway 72/77.

25. The Homebush Woolshed is an iconic building and many people stop to look at it and to take photographs. We have had many offers to buy it. Because of its status, there are plans under way to allow people to come into the woolshed as a heritage building, to see a real working woolshed, to have a cup of coffee, to buy some organic food and wine which is produced locally, and some woollen products. In other words, it will become a significant tourist destination.



The Woolshed

26. There are other plans under way which have not yet been made public.

27. The view is that this area is steeped in history, not only European history but also Maori. Some say that this is the spiritual heart of Canterbury.

CONCERNS

28. My concerns are on many levels.

- 29.As a heritage area, it is too beautiful and important as an historic area to be flooded.
- 30.As a family farm which has been in this family for five generations, since 1851, I am concerned that land that we have worked hard to protect will be taken from us by force. I am concerned that this action is unconstitutional and undermines the very freedoms that we chose to live in New Zealand for.
- 31.I am concerned that the forfeiture of land and the canal removes choices for the next generation.
- 32.I am concerned that this area, which has already been established as a significant tourist destination and is likely to increase, will be contaminated by the foul smell of rotting vegetation from the Valley every year when the water is drained from the reservoir in summer. This is our busiest season.
- 33.I am also concerned that the more water that is provided for dairying, the more will be required. As has been demonstrated by the low water levels in the Waimakiriri River with this summer's serious drought, it is not sustainable.

RELIEF SOUGHT

- 34.Due to the potential detrimental effects to our historic property, we ask that the Notice of Requirement be withdrawn and that all consents be declined.

Louise Margaret Deans
May 2008