

# PLAN CHANGE 13 SUBMISSION

What makes the Mackenzie unique is not only its landscape but also its incredibly rich rural history and community. As you well know this has been based largely on inter-generational farming families. These farming families have had to adapt and change as farming practices, economies and evolution have evolved. Plan Change 13 will halt this evolution and may well be the catalyst that will limit the ability of these farming families to continue their proud tradition. The ability to diversify and create opportunities to assist in family succession will be virtually impossible. To restrict subdivision to such large parcels of land with no right of creating building platforms is a huge impediment for these families to continue to own and operate their business heritage. (Spot Burn example)

Subdivision and amalgamation have ebbed and flowed in the Mackenzie Basin for the past 150 years. It baffles me why this council would choose to halt this process of evolution taking place, as new technology replaces old and farming practices evolve. It may well be possible to sustain a living from small parcels of land. I can well think of a number of these opportunities. Whether it is eco-tourism horticulture, viticulture, cranberry or Alpaca farming, or other opportunities that have not been thought of as yet. Most of these farming opportunities need resident managers for both security and management purposes. To restrict these opportunities to only large parcels of land whilst still not having a right to build is far too restrictive.

If this plan change was enforced it would also have a major impact on the property rights we currently have. This in turn will erode current equity on properties and will create increased financial stress on an industry already under severe threat. One wonders where a financial impact report is and whether the Council has given this fact due consideration. In my opinion, if this plan change is adopted a climate will have been created where only the rich and famous can afford to live. Is this what the Council has in mind?

The MacKenzie basin is already a highly modified environment. So for plan change 13 to state that it is an outstanding natural landscape in its entirety is in my opinion, flawed. I believe that we have to be more specific about what is meant by 'outstanding' and 'natural'. These landscapes have been highly modified by the raising of lakes, power generation schemes, roads, agriculture, forestry, heuracium and rabbits; to name but a few. I believe that the MacKenzie basin should be recognised as 'another rural landscape' with areas that have already been identified in our current district plan as being outstanding and natural. To classify all of the MacKenzie Basin Rural Areas into one subzone and claim that it is all an outstanding natural landscape, in my opinion would be very hard for the Council to defend in the Environment Court.

If one removed all buildings, towns and exotic plantings in the MacKenzie basin, and reverted all land to a rural zoning, under proposed Plan Change 13 rules, there would be very few of the current towns, settlements and homesteads that would be allowed to be established. It is quite ironic, that some of the most photographed scenes of the Mackenzie, are those that depict human input; eg, The church of the good Shepherd, Glentanner homestead.. Try and build these iconic buildings and homesteads in similar locations under Plan Change 13, would be impossible. Are we now so ashamed of our architecture, that the Council requires that it be hidden in the bottom of a gully, enclosed behind trees or a long way away from any vantage point.? I for one believe that buildings can and do enhance the aesthetic beauty of the landscape. In my opinion this makes a mockery of this proposed Plan Change. One would have to question the hidden agenda, or why the Council would choose to suppress growth, evolution and future opportunities that the basin may have in the future. One would also have to ask if the Council has done a social impact report on the effects of this plan change on communities in the MacKenzie Basin, if not, why not?

Having spent considerable time and energy on the evolution of our current plan where there was robust debate, compromises made and where a democratic outcome was, I believe, achieved, I pose the question once again, Why are the MDC proposing this plan Change? Where has the inappropriate development taken place that has made this necessary? The only inappropriate development that I can think of have both been initiated by this Council, or its agent and have been outside the rural zoning. These are the rezoning of recreational land at Lake Tekapo and the ribbon development at the Pukaki Airport. Both of these developments have been a huge financial gain to the Council, yet they choose to deny those in the rural community the opportunity to diversify, so that they can retain and strengthen their businesses. Perhaps the value of the Council's own land assets, may increase in value if this Plan Change was adopted?

Plan Change 13 is based on the expert opinion of one landscape architect and is diametrically opposite to that of the landscape architect that was used in creating the current District Plan, which also begs the question, "Who peer reviewed the Graham Demsen report? If it was not peer reviewed, then why not?"

Owning two properties in the rural zone we now find ourselves in a unique position, with one property, Balmoral Station, approximately 6,000 hectares of pastoral lease, which has a complete homestead setting, our second property, Mt John Station, 2,700 hectares of freehold land that has no infrastructure in the way of any buildings. Under the proposed Plan Change a homestead setting will not be permitted. I find it hard to believe there is no opportunity on 2,700 hectares to establish one. One wonders how much thought went into identification of building nodes as I find it quite amusing that some are established in river beds and also one in a Defence Force live firing zone!!!

You may well ask why I am submitting so strongly against this Plan Change, my

reasons are very simple. I believe in the community and the heritage that our fathers and forefathers built are worth fighting for. Plan Change 13 is well titled if you are superstitious, as I believe it will be the demise of the rural community as we know it if it is adopted, and may well be the demise of the MDC if we must pursue a legal solution. The sad part is that neither party wins.

The resolution that I seek from this hearing is that Plan Change 13 is withdrawn in its entirety and that the MDC look at opportunities where they believe lines should be tweaked under our current plan so that their concerns are addressed. Failing this outcome we are left with little choice but to pursue our grievance in the Environment Court.

I would also like to put on record that I am disappointed that there is no one on this panel that works or lives in the Mackenzie Basin so once again the decisions are being made by people who don't have to live with them.