

Mike Maassen

Plan Change 95, Pencarrow Estate, Memorandum 26th March 2025
Gardon Trust vs Auckland Council (2025) NZEnvC 58

In the Memorandum I have read the decision of the Environment Court in the matter of Gardon Trust and others vs Auckland Council PPC 73

It would appear to me on reading the Environment Court decision that the applicants of PPC 73 put forward a very compelling case to the Hearing Commissioners for PPC 73 and yet the Commissioners found that the loss of the highly productive land of PPC 73 outweighed all other benefits and they rejected PPC 73.

Points to consider in favour of PPC 73;

The PPC 73 land is directly adjacent to the township of Waiuku. A township with a population of nearly 10,000 and the second largest town in the Auckland region.

The PPC 73 land appears to have a long history of being identified for future urban development in the Franklin District.

The applicants of PPC 73 appear to have shown that a strong demand for new housing exists in Waiuku.

A residential development at PPC 73 would become part of and be an extension of an existing well-functioning urban area.

The PPC 95 land is also classified as highly productive land. In fact, the PPC 95 land is the 'Guts' of a very highly productive dairy farm indeed and the loss of this land will result in the end of this highly productive farming unit and the fragmentation of a large and geographically cohesive area.

However, unlike PPC 73's location, PPC 95 is located some 25 kilometres away on an already congested SH2 from the nearest existing well-functioning urban area, being Te Puke.

The PPC 95 land has never been considered by any of the relevant Councils as suitable for any urban development and in fact PPC 95 has been described by some as 'unanticipated, out of sequence and ad hoc.'

The applicants of PPC 95 have absolutely failed to show that there is any demand for new housing in Pongakawa.

(Houses in Pongakawa have very long sell times and as an example my neighbour Rachel has had to take her house off the market after being faced with little interest and offers well below what she paid for the place several years ago despite extensive improvements).

In fact, the Western Bay of Plenty's PC 92 appears to be addressing any housing shortfalls in the Te Puke district with extensive intensive housing developments in existing residential areas under way in the district.

I read in the Memorandum that;

Residential growth in New Zealand needs to happen in such a way that ensures New Zealand has well-functioning urban environments that enable all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future. PPC 95 provides for none of these objectives.

That residential growth needs to support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. As stated in my submission any residential development at the PPC 95 location will be very car-centric and result in very high vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) and the resultant discharge of high levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

That residential growth be resilient to the likely current and future effects of climate change. As stated in my submission the location of PPC 95 is vulnerable to flooding and water table rising. This location is a water receiving environment and as such vulnerable to any current and future effects of climate change.

I also firmly believe that residential growth should not compromise or threaten the environment. As stated in my submission there is considerable risk of environmental contamination arising from the PPC 95 plans for waste water disposal at this location.

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In the Reply Legal Submissions on behalf of Kevin and Andrea Marsh my detailed submission is dismissed as hearsay evidence, matters of unqualified expert opinion, factually incorrect and of very little relevance. Quite confronting I must say.

Sure, I am no qualified expert but I have lived and worked in Pongakawa since 1974. I have worked in a variety of local industries with many years in forestry, logging, dairy farming and kiwifruit orchard management. I attended the BOP Regional Council's Fresh Waters Futures Community Group meetings for several years as a recreational interests representative (Fishing, hunting and general outdoor activities) and I have been very active in a range of community groups and activities in the district.

I worked for the Spedding family in Pongakawa on a dairying and kiwifruit operation for 30 years and also did relief milking on various farms in the district for many years so I do know a bit about dairy farming in Pongakawa. I know what a very productive dairy farm looks like.

The returns for dairy farming, as in any rural enterprise, can fluctuate. Payouts have been as low as \$5 per kilogram of milk solids (KMS) and as high as \$10 KMS. Recent years have seen very healthy payouts of around \$8 to \$10 KMS and future forecasts being very rosy indeed. One dairy farmer I spoke to recently described a very buoyant industry indeed with his Fonterra shares rising by \$2 a share as a result.

If Kevin and Andrea Marsh cannot farm this land profitably and sustainably then they should move on and let the next generation of farmers take over.

Putting this very highly productive land into housing to satisfy their desire to leave a 'legacy' is not the solution. They should either invest in improving the farms infrastructure (as other successful local farmers have done and are now reaping the benefits of that investment) or they should move on.

Upon reading the memorandum regarding the Gardon Trust and others v Auckland Council just confirms my conviction that a residential development at the PPC 95 site is totally inappropriate.

Thank you for this opportunity to respond,
Nga mihi,
Mike Maassen.