

Pencarrow Estate - Private Plan Change 95

Update of Submission by Paul Hickson which was made in December 2023

Dated - 4 November 2024

My name is Paul Hickson and I made a submission in support of the the plan change last year.
I have now updated this submission for the hearing where I will strongly support the plan change.

Our family has farmed at Pongakawa since 1892. We have had five generations of family attend Pongakawa School.
I have operated my Chartered Accounting Practice from our family farm adjoining Pongakawa School Road from 1983.
I am trustee and manager of our dairy farm and kiwifruit orchard which is south of State Highway 2.

Over my lifetime I have seen considerable growth in the area and with the continuing change of land use from dairying to kiwifruit the need for housing is urgent. This urgency is illustrated by Baygold establishing a village for RSE workers at the lower end of Maniatutu Road. The development at Penelope Place at Arawa Road and popularity of that subdivision is another example even though that took place before the kiwifruit growth really took off with the success of the gold variety. The original Arawa Road offered housing to people like our retired sharemilkers who wanted to continue having a rural lifestyle and community and they, like others, continued to be involved with the school and other community organisations.

There are a growing number of jobs in the area in the kiwifruit industry and supporting service industries and the Pencarrow Estate will provide an environment where people can live, work locally and enjoy the existing amenities plus the new amenities proposed in the Estate. In the background there has been a proposal to have a large growth area near Rangiora Business Park but of course this in the long term and will not meet immediate needs. Another thing to consider is that at peak times kiwifruit workers work up to seven days a week and many jobs rely on fine weather. It is no good having a work force, say in Tauranga, when the sun comes out at 10.00 am on Sunday at Pongakawa and bud thinning is urgent.

One only has to refer to the books of the history of Pongakawa written by the Blaymires family to know the very strong community of past and present. The area has Pongakawa School, an Action Centre, a Community hall, swimming pool, squash court, sports field with cricket wicket and nets, playcentre and a building that has been donated for a heritage museum. This is all within two kilometres from the proposed development and walking distance for some. This is all physical and social infrastructure which exists now and is immediately available for new residents to enjoy.

In addition Pongakawa has local business such as garages (BP, Master Lotz, Pongakawa Motors), a panel beater, agricultural contractors, quarries, Wealleans Fertiliser and an important irrigation and water supply business relocating to the old Pongakawa Store site.

Many people are unaware that the Pongakawa Hall is a venue for meetings of suppliers to Fonterra and Zespri where the Chairpersons, CEO's, directors and senior management may attend. Both companies held meetings here recently where farmers and growers from across the Bay of Plenty attended.

Pongakawa has links into Te Puke and the wider Bay of Plenty. Te Puke has the high school and arts, business, cultural, retail service and sporting clubs which are all shared in common. Pongakawa people have historically seen Te Puke as their town. As an example of linkages I use below an example from my past:

I was Chairperson of Bay of Plenty Junior cricket for several years and at one stage delegates from across the Bay used to meet at our Pongakawa home. Pongakawa School had an period where it is was a leading school at intermediate cricket and had home and away games across the Bay of Plenty.

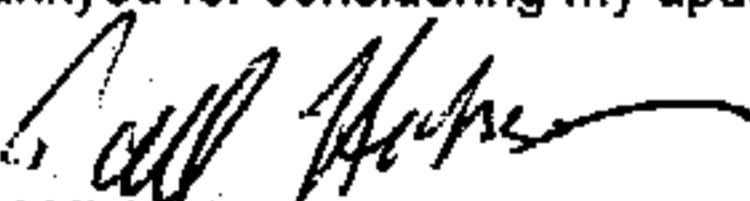
Many residents from our area have served both in local, Te Puke and Bay of Plenty organisations in business, culture and sports.

This history plus the natural economic growth of the district from the substantial investment in the kiwifruit industry, where New Zealand has international economic comparative advantage, shows that the proposed plan change must be supported as it meets an urgent need for housing for people to both work in the industry or related business. It provides a home for them close to work while they and families enjoy the benefits of living in the thriving community of Pongakawa.

As part of the plan change I believe that Waka Kotahi should reduce the speed limit to 70Km from West of the Puanene Bridge to East of the BP at Pongakawa

If the plan change progresses I would also like to explore with Council the provision of an improved pathway to Pongakawa School adjacent to Pongakawa School Road. A few residents still walk the road and we mow the Western side, including now down to our wetlands next to the railway.

Thankyou for considering my updated submission.


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