

Pamela Meekings-Stewart Submitter No. 100
144 Muri Road
Pukerua Bay

SNA004

Tenā koutou

While I have found the DP Review far too stressful and bureaucratic and have, therefore, withdrawn my request to be heard, I would however like to make the following points in addition to my original submission.

POINT ONE:

My first point is an emotional one – the loss of sovereignty over my own land – a land I nurture, love and have a strong spiritual connection to. But people need nurture too and a process of rules and Minutes takes little account of this.

As stated in my earlier submission:

32 years ago I purchased my property, on offer as 'grazing land', with no intention of farming it but to protect and rejuvenate some of the last remaining stands of native bush, including kohekohe, in the Pukerua Bay area. I had five criteria for purchasing approximately 20 acres of land:

Significant native bush

Pure spring water

Within commuting distance of Wellington

A view of the sea

No power pylons

I had answered a strong call to purchase this piece of land and even though it was considerably more than 20 acres – 136 acres in fact - I had a powerful spiritual connection to it and its trees. At the time of purchase the bush had been heavily grazed and no understorey existed, the land under the trees was bare. With this much land I could not afford to build a house so converted the existing shearing shed into a dwelling for myself and young daughter. With very little money to spare, I needed to find a way to pay for fencing so that the bush could regenerate safe from stock. Porirua City Council sent out an employee to look over the bush and declared that they had no interest in it and as far as they were concerned it was rubbishy scrub! The Department of Conservation came to the party under their Forest Heritage scheme with a 30-year Covenant in return for which they fenced the three most important bush areas comprising approximately 14ha. (Map B on original submission).

Land for me is not just about putting stock or buildings on it but about relationship – practically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. This is my responsibility and my sovereignty. And cannot be vested in another.

POINT TWO:

The fencing of the Covenant blocks by DOC has allowed me to earn an income from leasing paddocks for grazing sheep, cattle and horses on non-forested areas.

However, the 30-year Covenant with DOC has now expired and the fencing is in need of repair. As Porirua City Council has declared a keen interest in the native bush on my land and has declared approximately 45% of it a 'Significant Natural Area' (considerably more

than the 14ha under Covenant), I asked, therefore, whether they were prepared to fence the significant areas, undertake pest control, weed control and removal of wilding pines. The answer to each of these questions was 'no'! This means that the understory is no longer protected from stock and will ultimately severely inhibit any regeneration. Another solution of course, would be to cease leasing the grazing and remove all stock from the property. As this would mean a severe reduction in income, this is not an option.

A third solution would be to allow me to sell three x 2ha blocks on parts of my non-forested land so that grazing would no longer be necessary. This is the second part of my original submission which I believe will be heard in Hearing Stream 5.

POINT THREE:

In July of this year Mr Nicholas Goldwater and Dr Sarah Herbert came to visit the property on behalf of Porirua City Council. They walked around for about an hour which is a very short time for such a large area of bush and then submitted a slightly amended plan for the SNA boundaries. I mentioned that power lines from my entrance gate to the house also serve the Kiwi Rail signal boxes on the line close to my house and that Kiwi Rail periodically chainsaws all trees that are in the way of the lines. This has not been taken into account in their report. The power lines go directly across the middle of the SNA area to the left of my entrance gate.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer some further points.

Ngā mihi

Pamela Meekings-Stewart

144 Muri Road

Pukerua Bay

14th November 2021