

Submission to Porirua District Plan

From; Don and Jenny Mather
Address; 5 Moana Road, Plimmerton
Date; 29.10.2021

Council plan released 2020 seems to further restrict full use of and full enjoyment of our property at 5 Moana Road.

We have objected to the plan and are writing this submission for review of the PCC decision to proceed notwithstanding our objection. We thank the PCC for giving us this opportunity to state our case.

In making this submission we would ask the PCC to note our involvement in protection of local flora. We are members of Forest and Bird, we plant native plants on our property, use bicycles as our preferred mode of transport and do our best to protect the bank behind our house, impact of erosion being the prime risk to hill property open to the prevailing northerly winds. We would be fairly typical of the homeowners on Moana Road in managing our homes to protect and preserve the homes and land.

The problems are:

- 1 Our property is 50% zoned within the bush reserve area. Inclusion of our property within the bush reserve occurred during our ownership. We had previously objected to the zoning which was arbitrarily imposed without any apparent need. The 2020 plan adds in SNA requirements to be applied to all of the bush reserve.
- 2 This zoning limits our use of the property as it effectively requires PCC approval to do any tree work and obliges residents to employ professional arborists. There are severe penalties proposed if work is carried out to native trees without going through the costly process of approval and employment of arborists.
- 3 PCC states our section contains about 40 indigenous trees of several species. I am unable to verify the accuracy of this information as the steepness of the section makes identification and counting trees very uncertain.
- 4 Our property is small in area and the restricted part of the land is a very significant proportion of the whole, estimated visually by me at about 50 to 60%
- 5 It is not clear what the PCC hopes it will achieve by including our property in the bush reserve zone and what benefits this will bring to our community.

Background:

- 1 We have occupied this property for nearly 30 years
- 2 Approximately 50% of the property is at road level and this is where the dwelling is situated.
- 3 The gradient from the rear of the dwelling to Motuhara Road is about 45 degrees and the bank requires constant attention to ensure preservation of appropriate ground cover and avoidance of exposing the bank to risks of erosion by wind or rain

- 4 Every year we spend many hours on the back section controlling and eliminating, where practicable, the vinous weeds which encroach upon and are common to the Plimmerton bush reserves. These weeds attack and will destroy all trees if left unchecked. They do not discriminate between native and exotic trees.
- 5 Where the work is not within our capability we employ tree specialists to trim excess foliage. This work is needed quite frequently as our section faces west and the trees limit sunlight to the house.
- 6 At no time has PCC suggested that the work we have done at the property is in any way unacceptable or causes the least environmental damage.

Matters to be considered

- 1 The rights of full use and enjoyment which were implied in fee simple ownership are very much reduced if the amended plan includes our property.
- 2 What does PCC hope to achieve by including our small area of land within the bush reserve?
- 3 Note that residents of Motuhara Road properties have come on to our property to prune trees that spoil their view. This pruning, which can be substantial, is done without my knowledge or approval. Are we to be legally responsible under the proposed plan and bear penalties for these actions beyond our knowledge and control?
- 4 What does PCC consider to be adequate compensation when it unilaterally takes private land for its own purposes.
- 5 We have met all reasonable requirements of conservation of property and protection of the local environment and have done nothing that would suggest removal of our rights is fair and just. What has happened to cause PCC to think otherwise?
- 6 The real issue in protecting our property is control of erosion risk.
- 7 PCC should become familiar with the property and assess from inspection how difficult it could be to discern native from exotic plants
- 8 The likely financial cost to the owners in getting PCC permits and employing arborists to do the work that we currently do and have done for nearly 30 years.
- 9 There will come a time we must move on. At that time purchasers will no doubt seek to pay below proper value because of the potential cost and limitations upon management of the bush.
- 10 How difficult is it to amend the bush reserve area to exclude our property (this would practicably require exclusion also of numbers 2 and 3 Moana Road)

Impact assessment

We respectfully suggest that PCC should carry out a risk and cost assessment of the property as it stands within the bush reserve including SNA and a comparative risk assessment of the property if it is placed outside the bush reserve. We suggest the risk assessments should contain or consider financial costs analysis.