

Good morning I would like to introduce myself to you I am Jane Hennebry, I have lived in Hamilton city for over 40 years. This is my personal submission.

I am a regional councillor and have been for twelve years, currently the longest standing councillor among my peers. During that time I have been privy (more than most) to the proposed provisions of the Healthy Rivers Plan Change 1 process since its inception. Just like any other council matter - I entered into the process with an open mind to consider the changes proposed with the public's best interest at heart.

However over-time, as my views shaped I chose not to take any further part in council decision making on PC1, instead felt strongly I could better serve the community by making a personal submission to the process - I couldn't do both and here I am.

I oppose the plan. It's not currently workable, it's too costly to implement and farmers and others are telling you that.

My submission is about highlighting the financial implications and consequences of the process that I have watched unfold. The process has felt like a juggernaut unable to stop!

I salute our agricultural industry for what it brings to the Waikato region, for what it adds to our national and local economy, it has put us on the world map.....we have what they want.

It deserves more respect for the key role it plays in our ongoing prosperity.

What could the Waikato's footprint look like with out farming - more heavy industry or chimney stacks belching smoke maybe. Farming has brought us lush green pastures, the most beautiful scenery and as the Waikato has proved it's what we do best. We supply more milk than any other region in the country, our sheep and beef reaches all corners of the world and our agricultural support industries are many. We are our own success and in my view that's to be celebrated.

The proposed plan comes with very high environmental goals, posing challenges and changes which may not be manageable or practical and I repeat I hear farmers and industry telling you that.

It will certainly create more cost for the industry and all of us will pay more rates.

It must be quite daunting for industry leaders to be facing such changes to their livelihoods, not just for the next decade but as proposed many decades ahead, especially when Councils own figures and predictions paint such uncertainty and draconian pictures for the future.

Getting to the finances. Are you aware the healthy rivers process that you have been appointed to take to a decision in 2020 has so far cost ratepayers a staggering \$20million and a further \$6 million to implement so far. Almost \$30 million and climbing!

Costs are certain to balloon for all ratepayers as the industry prepares to challenge some of the regional councils proposals in the environment court. The risk for the industry (which they say they cannot afford NOT to challenge) may ultimately cost them over \$50 million dollars in legal and consultant fees. It's their fight for their livelihoods.

At a public information evening in 2013 the Regional Council presented this booklet - are you aware of it? On its cover it asks the public not to remove it from the meeting - yet it contained the very information the council gathered the public together to hear.

Some of the "integrated assessment and baseline and scenarios" posed in this document are alarming. Just the title alone is frightening enough!!

I will refer only to the Economic values and employment : value added for the Waikato region decreases by \$623m (3.5%). Value added for Waikato dairy farming decreases by \$265 m (16.6%) and for sheep and beef by \$96m (23.5%).

International exports: Total loss of \$462m of international exports, \$367 of which is from dairy product manufacturing and \$98 million from meat and meat product manufacturing.

Employment: Total employment count decrease of 0.9%, a large number of which is from dairy farming, and significant amount for 'other services'. Biggest impacts being felt in the Lower and Middle Waikato FMU's, Waipa had the most impact in the 'other services' sector.

There will be rural population decrease and job losses, population changes (in both number and age structure), smaller towns will have a significant impact on rates and ability to pay and impact on community services.

Even 10% of the total change proposed, on the pathway to achieving change, this diagram shows examples of what the future could bring.

Among other Losses: lose value add, international exports, employment and the economic benefit of water - all are losers. Loss of vibrant resilient communities, employment types and diversity and some infrastructure - all losers.

Improvements like recreation use, water clarity, flow, knowledge of swimming places, edible food and an abundance of fish species are promoted and are important but by then will our way of life value these changes?

What shape will our economy take if we chose draconian actions which will leave everybody out of pocket. Will we be able to enjoy the improvements. Will the plan really achieve this? Is the science correct? Will overseer be trusted??? when it was never designed as a regulatory tool. These are for you to decide.

Just think that we could have planted millions of trees on 1000's of farms in the Waikato and fenced hectare after hectare of streams for the sort of money spent so far – this providing immediate environmental benefit.....as yet nothing has given us any environmental benefits. Only a big fight likely to drag on and end in the environment court.

Devastatingly the costs to date could all be a waste should a new council chose to overturn much of what has been proposed or if the current government brings in a National Policy Statement which either undermines or overrides Plan Change 1 then the councils process could have been a waste of time.

There is no doubt these fears are out there in the business sector and rural community and when urban ratepayers realise they will have to absorb further costs they too will probably take more notice. Putting more financial strain on everyone.

At the Council meeting at the Don Rowlands Centre where Councillors were asked to accept the plan from the CSG - Council voted 7 for and 7 against. **Completely split down the middle.**

From feedback I have received from ratepayers I believe this split is fairly reflective of how the community feels.

It is a process which has cost far more than anyone expected and began with no idea of the true cost or implications and was adopted by council only on the casting vote of the Chairperson.

Questions I would like you to consider: Please consider that any plan changes must be practicable and financially sustainability, address environmental concerns by mitigation which is practical and balanced. We are a small country - rich with valuable resources which must be managed in a way that is practical and are usable.

So is the plan workable, will new rules be based on common sense and be affordable. Affordability is a daily concern for those in our communities who are on single and fixed incomes.

Please consider councils own economic report which I went into detail about, it states that the proposed plan will have significant negative impact on incomes for farmers, their suppliers and contractors. Creating job losses and the demise of small towns.

Please have in front of mind the uncertainty and fear that farmers are facing. Consider how farmers could provide information themselves to the council in an easy way. Give them the power to test their own water and supply results - don't create costly compliance fees.

Consider farms and catchments as individual and not one size fits all. Address the hot spots. I ask, "if a farmer is not polluting why should he pay".

The costs which came after the so called benefits must be considered together or they are valueless.

In my experience the consultation process has fallen short and has created a gravy train for consultants.

This council started a process which has gone way beyond the Vision and Strategy or any mandate (it thinks) it got from the public or central government (at the time) when its policy objectives then were to help the regions to thrive and move to higher value export returns.

People often see the Waikato as a strong regional economy. This is simply not true parts of the region are doing well but there are also some impoverished areas where whole towns rely on agriculture to survive - South Waikato, the Hauraki Plains. Otorohanga and Waitomo. Will these towns and their communities survive this economic impact?

I see a war emerging between the regional council and its employer, "ratepayers".

Time to talk about balance: Don't let's ruin the economy to make a point - it's not the place of Regional Council to be on an environmental crusade to lead the world - its role is to lead the Waikato, to make Waikato the very best it can be - in turn bolstering New Zealand Inc.

To achieve this goal Council planning must support a healthy economy in order to support a healthy environment.