

Addition to Evidence – Loveday Why 22/5/22

Thank you so much for reading my evidence. I hope I was able to convey to you the importance of the Ōtokia Creek and surrounds to the community in Brighton and wider Dunedin. My submission dealt mainly with the unquantifiable benefits of physical and mental health and wellbeing that arise from free access to the creek itself and the beautiful natural spaces around it.

Brighton Beach is the only beach in Dunedin that is safe for swimming - being patrolled by lifesavers during peak season – as well as having facilities, good car parking and easy beach access.

During Friday's hearing, I was pleased to respond to a question from the commissioners to a previous witness about bacteria in the creek as opposed to contaminants from possible leachates from the landfill.

The question presented the opportunity to make clear the crucial distinction between the occasional bacteria bloom from dairy run-off which can occur on a few very hot summer days, and the POP build-up from potential leachates which will have a long-term negative impact on the waterway itself and the wetlands, which the Ōtokia Creek Trust is currently working so hard to replant and replenish.

The potential build-up of pollutants is what we, as a community, are concerned about because of the detrimental affects to the physical health of our children who wish to swim in the creek, and what the Ōtokia Trust fears because it will undo the hard mahi that has been put into restoring our beautiful water environment.

We are pleased that the commissioners already understood this distinction between creek access being prevented occasionally due to bacterial bloom in the water – a situation the locals are used to - and creek access being prevented permanently by longer term build-up of contaminants – a situation which will devastate residents and visitors alike.

There are too many risks and unknowns attached to the proposed landfill, in terms of potential leachates, POPs and effects of possible seismic impact or other disasters leading to liner failure or other faults and breakdowns. Crucially, it will not necessarily be our generation that bears the impact of these real possibilities and risks, but our children and our grandchildren, who we are attempting to raise to be environmentally-conscious citizens, kaitiaki and custodians of our beautiful waterway and home.