

Before the Independent Hearings Panel
At Central Otago District Council

Under the	Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA or Act)
In the matter of	an application for subdivision and land use consent to establish another 44 residential allotments in the rural resource area at 112 & 144 Ripponvale Road, Cromwell (RC250155)
And	New Zealand Cherry Corp (Leyser) LP Applicant

Evidence of Paul Croft – Company Evidence

23 July 2026

Applicant's solicitor:

Sarah Eveleigh / Tallulah Parker
Anderson Lloyd
Floor 2, The Regent Building, 33 Cathedral Square, Christchurch 8011
PO Box 13831, Christchurch 8141
DX Box WX10009 Christchurch
p +64 27 204 1479 / +64 21 703 767
sarah.eveleigh@al.nz / tallulah.parker@al.nz

**anderson
lloyd.**

Introduction

- 1 My full name is Paul Stuart Croft.
- 2 I am the Chief Executive Officer of Infinity Investment Group Holdings Limited (**Infinity**) and Director and Chairman for the Applicant. The Applicant and developer of Shannon Farm is New Zealand Cherry Corp (Leyser) LP (**Applicant**), a partnership between Infinity and the Van Der Velden Family. I have been actively involved in all stages of the Shannon Farm development, overseeing concept development and design, securing rezoning and other approvals, marketing and sales, and construction and delivery.
- 3 I have over 25 years' experience in the property and finance industries. Before joining Infinity, I was based in London and served as an Assistant Portfolio Manager at UBS Global Asset Management, responsible for managing the UBS (Lux) Euro Value Added Real Estate Fund. I previously held various financial management positions with UBS Property Investment Funds. Before that, I was the Project Accountant in London for John Laing Group's Public-Private Partnership team and a Management and Fund Accountant at Henderson Global Investors, a subsidiary of the AMP Group.
- 4 I was employed by Infinity in 2009 as General Manager of Finance and was then promoted to Chief Financial Officer in 2010. In 2013, I was appointed General Manager. Since returning to New Zealand, I have overseen and delivered many large-scale residential and mixed-use developments throughout the South Island, including Peninsula Bay (Wanaka), Riverside Park (Wanaka), Yaldhurst Park (Christchurch), Ravenswood (Waimakariri) and Shannon Farm.
- 5 I have prepared this brief of evidence in relation to an application by the Applicant to the Central Otago District Council (**CODC** or **Council**) for subdivision consent and land use consent (RC250155, **Application**) to establish an additional 44 residential allotments in the Rural Resource Area (5) (**RRA(5)**) at 112 & 144 Ripponvale Road, Cromwell (**Site**).¹
- 6 I am authorised to provide this evidence on behalf of the Applicant.

¹ Legal Description(s): Section 54 Block III Cromwell Survey District, Section 26, 100 Block III Cromwell Survey District, Section 27-28, 96, 99, 102 Block III Cromwell Survey District, Lot 2 Deposited Plan 330709 and Section 4, 11, 98, 101, 103 Block III Cromwell Survey District and Part Section 5, 25 Block III Cromwell Survey District and Part Run 1201R.

Scope of evidence

- 7 My evidence will address the following:
- (a) Shannon Farm – the vision, Plan Change 14 (**PC14**), and progress of the development to date;
 - (b) Market demand and Shannon Farm development take-up;
 - (c) Efficient use of existing infrastructure; and
 - (d) Response to matters raised in the section 42A report.

Shannon Farm – the vision, Plan Change 14, and progress to date

- 8 Shannon Farm is a joint venture between Infinity and the Van der Velden family. Infinity brings significant experience in land development and investment projects throughout the South Island. At the same time, the Van der Velden family are a long-established Central Otago family with extensive experience in horticulture, rural land ownership and primary production. Henry van der Velden has a long history in real estate in Cromwell, where he owned First National Cromwell and completed many commercial and residential developments in his own right. The ownership group has a long-term commitment to Shannon Farm and its future residents, as well as the wider Cromwell community.
- 9 Located on the northern edge of Cromwell, Shannon Farm is a comprehensively planned development intended to deliver a mix of residential living opportunities, productive land use, open space, recreational amenities and supporting infrastructure.
- 10 I have been involved with the Shannon Farm development since its inception, and I was involved throughout the PC14 process. PC14 established the planning framework for Shannon Farm's long-term development and remains an important context for this Application.
- 11 Like Infinity's other developments in Wānaka, our aim was for Shannon Farm to set the benchmark for residential development in Cromwell. From the outset, the vision for Shannon Farm was not simply to create additional residential allotments. Rather, it was to develop a high-quality, master-planned rural lifestyle community that responded to the Site's unique features and its relationship with the wider Cromwell Basin. The landscape, open space and rural character of Shannon Farm have always been fundamental to the development's identity and appeal. It was deliberately master planned to respond to its surroundings, and we did not pursue a

high-density outcome because we considered a lower-density development to be more appropriate for the area.

- 12 From the outset, PC14 received considerable community support for the direction and vision envisaged for Shannon Farm. A total of 94 submissions were lodged. Of those, 74.5% of submissions supported or conditionally supported PC14, while only 24.4% opposed the proposal in whole or in part. In my view, that level of support reflected broad recognition of the benefits the plan change was expected to deliver, including additional housing and rural lifestyle opportunities, economic growth, employment generation, and improved public access and recreational amenity. This support has continued through the current Application process, which despite being publicly notified, did not attract any submissions in opposition.
- 13 PC14 was supported by significant technical work addressing landscape, urban design, transport, servicing, economics, and horticultural production. In my view, landscape and visual amenity considerations were among the most important matters considered through that process. Considerable effort went into understanding how development could occur while retaining the qualities that make Shannon Farm distinctive and ensuring that the development responded appropriately to the Site's landscape context and to the wider development of Cromwell.
- 14 PC14 was initially declined by the Hearing Panel decision, and this decision was appealed to the Environment Court. That process involved further engagement between the parties and further work by the relevant experts, including landscape and urban design experts. Council engaged a new landscape architect and as a result, considerable effort was required to work through the technical material that had developed over several years and establish a shared understanding of the issues and evolution of the proposal. Ultimately, the appeal was resolved by consent and RRA(5), together with the associated Structure Plan, was approved.
- 15 The outcome of that work was reflected in the Structure Plan approved through PC14. Development was generally directed toward the internal parts of the site. Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONLs**) areas were extended to enable the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Within the Significant Amenity Landscape (**SAL**), no-build areas were identified to protect areas most important to the maintenance of these landscape values. In my view, the outcome reached in PC14 retained the key landscape and amenity outcomes that had underpinned the proposal from the outset while providing pathways for Shannon Farm to develop over time to provide rural living opportunities for the Cromwell community.

- 16 My experience with other developments is that, despite best endeavours at the planning stage, there are always some elements of a proposal that become subject to change in response to new information or opportunities arising during the delivery phase. Accordingly, I did not view PC14 as fixing every detail of Shannon Farm's final development. Rather, it established the overarching framework for the Site's long-term development. It identified the areas to be protected, including through the extended ONLs and identification of no-build areas within the SAL, while providing for further development and intensification within the balance of the site. In my view, it was always anticipated that Shannon Farm would continue to evolve within that framework over time in response to Cromwell's growth and changing development needs.
- 17 Since PC14 was approved, the Applicant has invested significantly in implementing the Shannon Farm development. Since that time, substantial investment has been made in delivering the development, including roading, three waters infrastructure, earthworks, and site servicing. In addition, we have consulted with Cromwell Mountain Bike Club on the design and consent of the mountain bike tracks through the ONL and have completed all amenity planting in areas around the perimeter of the site as identified on the ODP. Development is now well underway, with residential allotments created and sold and supporting infrastructure continuing to be delivered across the site.
- 18 Through the process of obtaining subdivision consents, undertaking site construction, and marketing and selling lots, we have gained a detailed understanding of how the framework established through PC14 translates into outcomes on the ground, the preferences of building companies and future residents, and where some adjustment to the initial layout will improve the ultimate development. The wider Cromwell area has also continued to evolve, reflected more recently through Plan Change 19 (**PC19**) and the additional residential capacity provided elsewhere in the township.
- 19 In my view, the current proposal is a logical evolution of the Shannon Farm development.

Market Demand and Shannon Farm development take-up

- 20 Since PC14 was approved, we have experienced strong and sustained demand for the lifestyle product offered at Shannon Farm.
- 21 Stage 1 of the development is almost completely sold. Of the 49 sections released in Stage 1, for which titles were issued in February 2026, 45 have been sold unconditionally. A further 63 sections were recently released to

the market through a soft launch, and within a couple of weeks six sections have been sold, including four unconditional sales. In my view, these sales figures demonstrate continuing demand for residential living opportunities within Shannon Farm and support the need for further stages of development to meet that demand.

- 22 The level of market confidence in Shannon Farm is also reflected in the significant investment being made by the local building sector. Eleven building companies have committed to establishing show homes within the development. The proposed show home village is expected to be one of the largest in the wider South Lakes area. In my view, it is unlikely that builders would commit the capital required to establish and maintain show homes within Shannon Farm unless they had confidence in the development and the demand for the lifestyle product it offers. The scale of that investment provides a further indication of the strength of demand for Shannon Farm and its appeal to future residents.
- 23 In my experience, purchasers are attracted to Shannon Farm because it offers something different from more conventional residential development while still being conveniently located close to Cromwell's town centre. The combination of larger allotments, open space, landscape amenity, and a strong connection to the surrounding rural environment has been a key driver of demand.
- 24 Through marketing initial stages of the development and discussing future stages with prospective purchasers, including those building companies who have invested in construction of show homes and therefore have a clear interest in future stages, it has become apparent to us that the greatest demand for lots in the Shannon Farm development will be within the 1,500 - 3,000m² range. Lots of this size are attractive because they provide the benefits of a lifestyle living environment, including greater privacy, landscaping opportunities, and flexibility of activities that require additional land (including recreational activities, workshops, or hobby scale productive use), without the management obligations typically associated with larger lifestyle blocks, and at a price point that is more achievable for a greater number of future residents.
- 25 While additional residential capacity has since been provided elsewhere in Cromwell, including through PC19, Shannon Farm continues to offer a distinct rural-lifestyle product not generally available elsewhere in Cromwell. In my view, PC19 was intended to serve different market segments and address different customer preferences. Shannon Farm remains the only rural-lifestyle development I am aware of in Cromwell that

has been master planned, while alternative offerings are ad hoc rural lifestyle sections popping up randomly around the district.

- 26 The market preference for lots in the 1,500–3,000m² range is also consistent with the economic evidence of **Mr Colegrave** and the observations of **Ms Copeland** from Barrett Homes Central Otago (see letter attached in **Appendix One**). **Mr Colegrave** concludes that the proposal represents a modest "right-sizing" of a development that is already master-planned and serviced, reflecting demand that has become concentrated at smaller lot sizes than originally anticipated. **Ms Copeland** similarly observes strong demand for sections in the 1,500–3,000m² range, noting that purchasers are seeking a balance between the benefits of lifestyle living and the practicality of managing a smaller property. In my experience, that accurately reflects the preferences of many prospective purchasers considering Shannon Farm.

The Application for additional lots

- 27 This Application represents the next stage of the Shannon Farm development. It builds on the development framework established through PC14 and the infrastructure already being delivered on the Site. It responds to ongoing demand for residential living opportunities in Cromwell while maintaining the integrated, master-planned approach that underpins the wider Shannon Farm development.
- 28 In broad terms, the Application seeks to provide an additional 44 residential allotments within the Shannon Farm development, together with the associated infrastructure, earthworks and access arrangements necessary to support this. The proposed allotments range in size from approximately 1,800 m² to 6,900 m², with an average allotment size of approximately 3,120 m², providing a variety of rural residential lot sizes consistent with the character anticipated for Shannon Farm.
- 29 The Application builds on the existing consented development and enables the more efficient use of land already identified for development within the approved Shannon Farm planning framework.

Efficient use of land and existing infrastructure

- 30 Significant investment has already been made in the delivery of Shannon Farm, including the provision of water, wastewater, stormwater, roading and utility infrastructure required to support the wider development. A substantial amount of this infrastructure has already been constructed or is planned and designed as part of the long-term implementation of Shannon Farm. This includes a dedicated irrigation network servicing individual

allotments, which is monitored by a Residents Society established for irrigation and was required through the engineering approval process and has required further investment in the infrastructure supporting the development.

- 31 The proposed additional 44 allotments can be accommodated within that established framework. The Application will utilise the existing water and wastewater networks, including the reservoir, booster pump infrastructure and reticulation designed to service future stages of development. The supporting engineering assessments confirm that the proposed allotments can be accommodated without requiring fundamental upgrades to the wider servicing network.
- 32 The Application also makes use of the roading, stormwater and utility infrastructure already established through earlier stages of Shannon Farm. While additional local roads, accessways and service extensions are required, these are largely extensions of infrastructure already anticipated as part of the wider development and can be integrated into the existing network.
- 33 From the Applicant's perspective, one of the key benefits of the Application is that it enables additional residential capacity to be provided within an area already planned for development, while making efficient use of infrastructure already invested in. For example, parts of the proposal utilise land adjoining existing internal roads and infrastructure that has already been constructed or planned to service residential development. Rather than extending development into new areas, the proposal builds upon the significant infrastructure and servicing framework established through PC14 and the subsequent stages of Shannon Farm. It also represents a more efficient use of land, by delivering a greater number of rural lifestyle sections at a range of lot sizes that proportionately better reflect market preferences and intended use.
- 34 In my view, this is a practical and efficient way to accommodate demand. It allows land and existing and planned infrastructure to be used more effectively, while remaining consistent with the overall vision, landscape framework and development pattern established for Shannon Farm.

Response to matters raised in the s42A report

- 35 I have reviewed the s42A report. While I acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the proposed increase in residential allotments and departures from the lot size framework established through PC14, my experience with Shannon Farm leads me to a different view of how the development has evolved in practice.

- 36 As discussed above, since PC14 was approved, the Applicant has invested significantly in delivering the vision for Shannon Farm. Through that process, we have developed a detailed understanding of how the development translates into outcomes on the ground, the attributes purchasers value, and the demand that exists for the type of rural lifestyle living opportunities provided at Shannon Farm.
- 37 In my view, the current proposal remains consistent with the fundamental outcomes provided for by PC14. It will continue to deliver a rural lifestyle development with a range of lot sizes, open space and amenity plantings, protection of the ONL, recreational opportunities including mountain bike trails through the ONL, protection of the upper slopes of the SAL through the no-build area, and productive lots on the lower parts of the development.
- 38 The part of the site that forms part of the Application does not have and is not near any area that has any meaningful productive capacity. Unlike the Rural Lifestyle Production Areas (**RLPA**), it is not underlain by productive soils, does not have access to commercial irrigation, and was not identified through the PC14 process as an area requiring productive uses to be maintained.
- 39 The s42A Report also acknowledges that the proposal builds on significant existing infrastructure investment. From the Applicant's perspective, providing additional allotments within an area already identified and planned for development represents an efficient use of infrastructure and land resources while maintaining the overall character and quality of the Shannon Farm development.

Conclusion

- 40 Having been involved in Shannon Farm from its inception, through the PC14 process and into implementation, I have seen the vision for the development move from concept to reality. Significant investment has been made in delivering that vision, including the establishment of infrastructure, open space, landscaping, recreational amenities and residential allotments. The strong uptake of the development to date has reinforced my view that Shannon Farm is providing a product that is sought and valued by the Cromwell community.
- 41 In my view, this application is a modest refinement to an already approved and established master-planned development. It continues to deliver rural-lifestyle lots within the size range and locations broadly anticipated at Shannon Farm. It does not alter the fundamental framework established

through PC14, nor does it affect the ONL, no-build areas, productive land, open space network or other key features that underpin Shannon Farm.

- 42 Instead, the proposal reflects the practical experience gained through implementing the development, a better understanding of purchaser preferences, and the opportunity to accommodate additional rural lifestyle living opportunities within an area already planned and serviced for development.
- 43 For those reasons, I consider the proposal is the best use of the land, is a logical and appropriate next step in the evolution of Shannon Farm, and should be supported.

Dated 23 July 2026

Paul Stuart Croft

Appendix One: Barrett Homes Letter, dated 20.07.2026



**Barrett
Homes**

Welcome to
the *family*.

20th July 2026

Deidre Copeland

1 McKellar Court
Cromwell 9310
New Zealand

Dee@barrethomes.co.nz

To whom it may concern

Re: Demand for Residential Sections in Cromwell and the Benefits of the Shannon Farm 44-Lot Subdivision

- 1 My name is Deidre Copeland and I am co-owner of Barrett Homes Central Otago, based in Cromwell.
- 2 I have been asked to provide this letter regarding our involvement in the Shannon Farm development and the wider Cromwell residential land market to inform consideration of an application by New Zealand Cherry Corp Limited (Leyser) LP for resource consent to establish an additional 44 residential allotments at the Shannon Farm.
- 3 Barrett Homes is a New Zealand-owned residential building company that has been operating since 2013. We specialise in house-and-land packages, design-and-build homes and residential development projects, and construct approximately 150 homes each year throughout New Zealand. We maintain a strong presence in Central Otago and have been actively involved in the Cromwell housing market for a number of years. We have been the BCIT Top builder for 5 years in a row, building more residential homes in Central Otago than any other builder.
- 4 We are currently constructing a show home in Shannon Farm. We have purchased 3 sections which we are now marketing as house-and-land packages. We also have a number of Design and Builds under way for clients that had purchased their sites. We hope to continue buying sections at Shannon Farm in the future.
- 5 Through our day-to-day activities, we regularly engage with prospective purchasers looking to build homes in Cromwell. Based on that experience, it is my view that demand for rural residential sections in Cromwell remains strong and continues to exceed the supply of available land in desirable locations. Finding suitable land over 1500m² is very challenging, especially

easily accessible, well serviced land. I think there is a real need for sites ranging in size around 1500m² – 3000m².

- 6 We receive regular enquiries from individuals and families seeking opportunities to build in Cromwell. Many prospective purchasers are looking for sections that can accommodate larger family homes, provide outdoor living space, and allow for storage of recreational vehicles, boats, and other equipment commonly associated with the Central Otago lifestyle. In our experience, purchasers continue to place a high value on larger residential sections and developments that offer a high-quality living environment.
- 7 At the same time, there is a clear preference for allotments that are appropriately sized and manageable, rather than oversized sections that can create unnecessary cost and maintenance obligations. In our view, the allotments proposed as part of this Application strike an appropriate balance between providing generous living environments and making more efficient use of the land resource, while remaining attractive to the market.
- 8 While sections are periodically released within Cromwell, the available supply is often quickly absorbed. Opportunities of the size of allotments contemplated by the Applications within larger, comprehensively planned developments like Shannon Farms are relatively limited, which can create challenges for purchasers seeking to secure land and proceed with building projects in a timely manner.
- 9 Barrett Homes Central Otago has observed strong market interest in Shannon Farm in particular. The development's location, outlook, amenity values and proximity to Cromwell township have proven attractive to a wide range of purchasers. We have found that buyers are attracted to the quality of the environment and the opportunity to build homes within a well-planned community.
- 10 Based on our experience, Barrett Homes considers that the proposed allotments within Shannon Farm are well aligned with current market preferences and are likely to be attractive to purchasers in Cromwell.

I have been extremely impressed with the overall quality and careful planning that has gone into Shannon Farm, it is definitely a standout subdivision in our community and one we can all be proud of.

Yours sincerely,



Deidre Copeland
Co- Owner
Barrett Homes Central Otago