

C & K Teusner Nominees Pty Ltd

28/11/2014

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Dear Peter Houston,

Re Description Significant rural land Concordia

Following up from phone conversation with Kirstin Teusner 27/11/2014

I believe you made the comment that Concordia was good farming land because "it has good soils."

Two points

Concordia does not have what, I as a farmer would consider, very good quality soils in many areas (especially outside the 30 year plan)

Good soil also does not simply translate to a good viable farming area.

I was surprised with the blunt refusal to have a meeting regarding the issues with farming at Concordia, especially that whilst there appeared to be some awareness of these issues it was there appeared a reluctance to accept that these had an impact.

It's good just because it's good. I thought on this a while and realized that perhaps here in SA we are missing some opportunities. My daughter is in the process of buying a house in Adelaide, not a huge block but by today's standards quite good.

It appears the soil is quite good and I'm sure the rainfall is at least the equal of Concordia – should be good farming land.

However before jumping in I must ask myself some questions.

1. Access, can I move machinery to nearby areas, can contractors legally and practically gain access.
2. Are the roads "B" double rated to have economic access to many markets.

3. Will there be spray issues with nearby residents and landholders.
4. Noise and perhaps dust issues.
5. Economies of scale- is the area actually large enough to be economically viable.
6. Livestock, can we move them economically, will there be a higher than acceptable risk of marauding dogs from the locality.
7. Value adding, is there any real prospects of being anything else than just a producer of a bulk commodity.
8. Is there going to be any nearby developments which will further restrict and create additional viability problems.
9. Is the local / state government going to implement any laws / policy changes that will devalue my business net worth?
10. If I use the land as agricultural land will my council rates increase as they do in the Barossa Council?
11. Stubble and residue burning for non-chemical ryegrass control, can it be done in a timeframe to actually be effective?
12. When I do a detailed (accurate) soil test will it actually indicate high productivity or will it actually have areas of shallow stone or water logging clays?
13. Aerial spraying and fertilizer spreading sometimes essential for timely management.
14. Is there going to be a World Heritage listing that God only knows the full implications of.

I feel confident that due diligence not rose colour glasses will provide answers.

Back to Concordia, I believe we have all the same issues but we were here first. These issues have been built around us while we have been minding our own business.

Example

We have just (04/12/2014) completed harvesting a paddock of canola that is adjacent to vineyards. 3 years ago we (as part of varied integrated strategic ryegrass control policy) wanted to burn the header rows.

To be effective a hot, slow burn is necessary. The adjoining vineyard at the time had not been harvested and we were advised that we would be sued if the grapes had any smoke taint. We were forced to wait.

It rained and the header rows became saturated. Eventually realized (never told) the adjoining grapes were not going to be harvested anyway.(what a waste of S.A water resources!). Header rows did not burn properly giving no ryegrass control in places.

Herbicide resistant ryegrass, now out of control in large parts of the paddock, estimated loss of yield 2014 – 60T canola @ approx. \$500t.

Plus cleaning costs, to get canola to receival standard. Plus last 2 years of problems and following years. We will now need to attempt (burning restrictions) a whole paddock burn.

Consequences – Livestock must be kept out of paddock to prevent seeds to be walked into the soil.

- Loss of valuable organic matter.

- As the land is quite undulating (steep in some places) and has areas of highly water erodible red/brown earth, water erosion risks are greatly increased.
 - Potential seeding delay 2015 as multiple knockdown sprays (roundup/sprayseed) will be needed.
 - Lack of weed control will mean that the canola rotation will be ineffective. Extra costs, less yield, extra carbon emissions (burn and fuel). Time wasting rather than productive work. Associated stress with financial costs and the associated non-productive condition of the land.
- This is just one simple example; this year with a similar issue Barossa Council advised us “can’t you leave it”? I’m not sure about the economic soundness of this statement.

For nearly 30 years we have tried to have local/state government look at these issues before it was too late, through previous inactions and further actions, now it is too late.

I notice that the often commonly used term “sustainable” is never mentioned to describe Concordia, the much less definitive word substantial (which can mean almost anything you want) is used.

Should economic, profitable, and sustainable be used to describe the status of land as opposed to the “motherhood” description of “undulating plains” and substantial.

I ask you now formally, as State and Local govt. look to PIRSA for valuable input to their policy making, for an opportunity to explain Concordia’s circumstances more thoroughly. Perhaps somebody qualified in Ag economics and agronomy would be highly desirable to also attend to complement a planning perspective.

If you are not able to do this could you please let us know who in PIRSA to contact?

Yours Sincerely

Charles Teusner

CC. Agricultural Minister Leon Bignell, Shadow Minister David Ridgway, Minister Tony Piccollo, Stephan Knoll MP, John Darley MLC, Martin McCathy CEO Barossa Council, and Paul Mickan senior planner Barossa Council

