

Comments to FastTrack Panel re Maitahi Village subdivision (PC28), Nelson

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Property Owner & Occupier at [REDACTED] Maitai , Nelson 7010

We are concerned that Fast Tracking the Maitahi Village Subdivision may overlook some serious concerns our family and the community share.

The Maitai Valley is Nelson's last undeveloped valley. It is an important recreation area and recreation corridor close to the city centre, that leads up into the mountains. It is used for recreation daily, year-round by users of all ages and for a wide variety of recreational activities . The application to subdivide Kaka Valley , located in the Maitai Valley has been opposed by thousands of people who wish to protect the valley from housing intensification for recreation and environmental reasons.

Urbanisation in Kaka Valley will negatively impact the extremely popular adjacent recreational areas of the lower Maitai Valley.

Upon turning off Nile Street and driving into the Maitai Valley, one feels transported miles from the city, which is an important recreational escape for many Nelsonian's.

The development will damage this recreational retreat from the central city.

Flooding

Living at [REDACTED] for the past 22 years, our family have walked, mountain biked and ridden our horses weekly over Kaka Valley , the "farm next door" being the site for this development.

The hillsides and valley floor of Kaka Valley where this development is proposed to be sited is one big soak pit and the slopes are sodden over the winter months. The valley floor is a flood plain for the Maitai River to spill out onto when in flood. It provides capacity for flood water, slows the flood waters down and has flood debris deposited upon it.

There are multiple springs (even one that pops up in the middle of Ralphine Way) when it rains. The slopes are prone to slipping, especially when disturbed by earthworks.

Development will worsen the impact of flooding off site:

While engineering solutions may retain the slopes and channel the water, this proposed development in heavy rain events will send a highly increased volume of water straight into the Maitai River to worsen the flooding impact on neighbouring properties and hugely increase the volume, speed & sediment downstream.

Flooding & Roding

Access to Kaka Valley is cut off in flood events:

Flooding occurs at the corner of Maitai Valley Road & Ralphine Way.

Flooding occurs in Branford Park, spilling across Maitai Valley Road.

Flooding in these areas closes the access to Kaka Valley, especially on the Ralphine Way intersection area.

It may not be wise to be building intensively in a valley where flooding (predicted to worsen with climate change) can isolate the area.

Roading is cut off during flooding, therefore the developers and council are knowingly putting residents in harm's way by building in an area that gets cut off from supplies & medical services in heavy rain events.

In August 2022 Ralphine Way was cut off for over 4 days. When traffic was allowed back it was restricted by road blocks. Furthermore, it took several years of on & off work before the slip at the entrance to the Maitai Valley was repaired and the road reinstated to two lanes again. This highlighted how vulnerable the Maitai Valley access is to flooding and slip events.

Traffic Flow & Safety / Roothing

There will be years of traffic management from the supply of services such as sewerage , water and telecommunications into the valley (which is non existent now) and then the construction traffic for the land development, roading infrastructure and buildings. All blocking and slowing access into the Maitai Valley, Maitai Valley Road and Ralphine Way for current residents and recreation users. This will be over a decade and possibly up to 40 years of disruption and noise depending on speed of development. There will be significant impact also on the residents of Nelson East such as Nile Street.

Once the development is completed , there will be increased traffic from the daily commuters to and from the new housing.

This development will create Queues of Traffic :

At the Nile Street , Maitai Valley intersection.

At the Gibbs one Lane Bridge.

And at corner of Maitai Valley & Ralphine Way

All three of these locations are hazardous to traffic now, before the proposed development begins. The sight lines on all three of these locations pose traffic safety issues.

There is poor visibility turning out of Maitai Valley Road onto Nile Street . This is a seriously difficult intersection to navigate currently and can not be left in its current state.

The last 300m of Maitai Valley Road leading to Nile Street is very narrow. A section of this is narrowly constrained by the River Bank on one side and the Rock Bluff on the other. This section is currently very narrow when passing logging trucks and the developers propose to make the carriageway even narrower. There are long term "temporary" concrete protection barriers in place to catch falling debris. Remedial work to the rock face done prior to the development could remove the need to reduce the carriage way. It could prevent future slips that will block the road or reduce it to one lane again as it was for up to two years after the flooding in 2022.

Traffic will back up while waiting to cross Gibbs Bridge (one lane bridge).

Gibbs Bridge has had several cars crash into it during the time we have been living here and often traffic must hit the brakes and back up to avoid traffic coming in the opposite direction.

The bridge alignment makes it difficult to see vehicles coming from the other direction unless you position your vehicle into the middle of the road.

Gibbs Bridge may need to be widened into a double lane to prevent congestion and accidents. The approach onto and the bridge will not be safe for cyclists with increased traffic.

Ralphine Way / Maitai Valley Road could become a black spot for crashes as cars coming down Maitai Valley Road may collide with vehicles exiting Ralphine Way. It has frost on this intersection in winter and leading up to the one lane Gibbs Bridge.

There will be increased traffic flowing down Nile Street which is already narrow and hard to navigate, especially when passing larger vehicles and trucks.

In peak use in the recreational areas of the lower Maitai Valley, there is a shortage of parking. Parking needs to remain on the side of the road for recreation users in the lower Maitai Valley using Brandford Park and the Maitai Cricket Ground and the three popular swimming holes. Across the road from us Waahi Taakaro Reserve /Sunday Hole has traffic parking on Maitai Valley Road & Ralphine Way in summer as the carpark becomes full.

Often traffic is parked on both sides of Maitai Valley Road alongside the Maitai Cricket Ground used by children's sports teams for football and cricket. This narrows the road and traffic needs to move carefully through this area.

Construction Noise & Dust

We are concerned about noise from the development, this is particularly relevant for us living in Ralphine Way, close to the development and with our house situated close to the road. Noise generated by earthworks vehicles, roading and other infrastructure construction, building, and all the associated vehicles travelling through residential areas on their way to the subdivision, could go on, according to the subdividers' promotional video on Stuff, for up to 40 years.

While this will be stressful on us it is also impacting on the entire Nelson community who come to the adjacent area for several different types of recreation, from cricket, to picnics, swimming, running, dog-walking, frisbee golf, bush-walking, bike riding, jogging or just sitting in the sunshine.

As neighbours to the development we also have concerns over the dust from the development drifting in the air and dirt off the truck wheels onto Ralphine Way & Maitai Valley Road.

Reserve areas

a reserve area is shown on what is currently the flood plain for the Maitai River. This area will be subject to future flood damage. The Channel of The Maitai River is moving its course and aiming directly into this proposed Reserve Area which currently is a flood plain for the river. The River is eating into the front of this area with the previous farmer moving his fencing back five times as each flood took more of their paddocks away.

The neighbouring property at [REDACTED] has Riparian rights down to the water. Their property title now extends well into the Maitai River, due to flooding eroding the river bank.

The lay out of the proposed Reserve Area and paths must be done in such a way to deter users from thinking they can walk through this area alongside the river, as it is private property.

Due to the difficulties posed by the one lane Gibbs Bridge for cyclists ; Can the Council and developers considered constructing a Shared Path around the Back of Dennes Hole.

There is already a legal road from Maitai Valley Road to Maitahi Title.

A shared walk & cycle path from the subdivision around the back of Dennes Hole to the City would feel like a natural “short cut”and promote use.

This may be the better option financially, safety wise and ergonomically.

There could be a path way along the side of the hill above the flood level, creating an access path for when Ralphine Way intersection is closed due to flooding.

The alternative is a shared walk , cyclepath that has to cross alongside the Gibbs One Lane Bridge and then proceed up Ralphine Way which is a steep gradient.

A shared path around the back of Dennes Hole will bypass the two bridges and the Maitai Cricket Ground where there can be traffic congestion with parking on the road sides.

It will also bypass the Ralphine Way / Maitai Valley intersection.

Soil Contamination & Waterways

The Maitahi subdivision developers propose to use the fast-track application process to permit the realignment of Kaka Stream through a HAIL site (historical sheep dip, run off area and woolshed), severely contaminated with high levels of dieldrin, arsenic, heavy metals and other toxic chemicals. This realignment would redirect overland and groundwater flows directly through and downstream of the remediated contaminated area. In addition material from the HAIL site may be redistributed elsewhere on site. Both these activities may lead to long term environmental pollution.

The previous land owners allowed dumping of hard fill onto the area of paddocks to the south of the woolshed & sheep & cattle yards. Testing of the surface soils in this area may give a false reading to any contamination by chemicals as it is imported fill from offsite.

Has the area of contamination has been properly established ?

Soil dug out from this area should not be used elsewhere if it is contaminated.

Kaka Stream should not be realigned to flow throw a HAIL Site and then onwards into The Maitai River where families swim & play and out into The Haven & Tasman Bay.

Airborne Dust from this soil is a health concern for us as neighbours.

Healthy Homes/ Air Pollution

Misty fog can sit in Kaka Valley in winter mornings.

Urbanisation in this area needs to be mindful of air pollution from fires for both the residents in the new houses in Kaka Valley and any air pollution from their dwellings flowing on the Maitai Breeze at night down the valley into the Nelson East Airshed.

We are pleased to see the Developers will be addressing this in a Land Covenant, clean air policy.

Kaka Valley is very cold, shaded and damp in winter months. It is an environment where greater artificial heating will be required as homes face little warmth from the sun in winter in this valley.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit

I hope you will bear these facts in mind when you make your decision about whether or not to fast track the PC28, and only proceed to fast track it, if you believe the concerns outlined above will be properly addressed through the Fast Tract process.

Yours faithfully
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