



Outlook

Ōhoka Residential Subdivision Fast-track Application feedback

From [REDACTED]**Date** Thu 8/10/2026 10:38 AM**To** FastTrack Substantive <substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz>

Dear Fast track Approvals Expert Panel,

As an adjacent property owner, a father, and a long term local resident, I am lodging this feedback out of intense concern for my family's physical safety and our lifetime financial security. My wife and I purchased our property at [REDACTED] specifically for its historic village character, its open space, and its immediate proximity to the Domain—which functions as a vital extended backyard for our young boys and our dog. This proposal strips that liveability away. Our boys currently bike safely down Mill Road to the local school; introducing a high density, 850+ home traffic matrix right onto our boundary intersection permanently compromises their daily safety.

Furthermore, forcing this heavy suburban footprint onto an unconfined high water table and unyielding clay lines creates severe, unmitigated flood risks. Within our first six years in our home, we have already experienced significant flooding which almost breached our already elevated floor. I am deeply alarmed that this manufactured hazard will trigger an immediate insurance retreat, destroying our entire livelihood while the developer exits with a risk-free profit. This panic is not an emotional overreaction; it is the direct physical and mathematical consequence of the critical engineering information gaps, deceptive macro-modelling shortcuts, and systemic network failures detailed in the technical evidence below.

1. REJECTION OF GENERALISED REGIONAL MODELLING IN FAVOUR OF LOCALISED ENGINEERING EVIDENCE

The applicant's reliance on generalised, district-scale macro-modelling is a clear attempt to obscure the dangerous reality of this site. This development footprint sits directly on a high, fluctuating water table and tight, clay soils that are physically incapable of absorbing rapid, high-density suburban stormwater runoff. The developer has deliberately chosen to use broad regional maps to brush over localised vulnerabilities, the exact structural failure that saw this inappropriate project formally reviewed and completely rejected twice before by independent commissioners.

This generalised approach directly contradicts both the expert, site-specific flood modelling assessments commissioned from independent engineering specialists by our local Residents Association, and the rigorous independent technical assessments contracted by our District Council. The professional engineering models formally detail a severe lack of ground validation in the developer's data and prove that displacing water onto these clay lines creates an unacceptable, severe flood hazard risk to existing homes. Even with the applicant's heavily modified amendments filed by PDP on 9 September 2026, the laws of hydrology remain unyielding. By cramming 850+ high-density lots onto this land, the developer physically lacks the surface area required to build detention basins capable of minimising runoff. This creates a severe, deliberate displacement of flood water directly onto lower-lying, established properties in the historical Ohoka village. The

panel must address this localised reality first, rather than accepting generalised models designed to hide localised hazard propagation.

2. TECHNICAL DEFICIENCIES AND TIMING GAPS IN WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The applicant's brand-new supplementary filings (Appendix 22 and Appendix 28a, dated 9 September 2026) provide clear evidentiary admissions that validate the community's worst fears. The PDP wastewater memo explicitly records the presence of a high water table directly impacting their structural designs and acknowledges "significant inflow during flooding events" to the wastewater network. Multiplying this operational strain across 850+ new houses creates an unavoidable risk of systemic infrastructure failure and localised contamination.

Crucially, the applicant's mitigation strategy relies on WDC Stage 2 infrastructure upgrades that are not scheduled or funded to exist until 2032. Approving an 850-home footprint that hooks into an already vulnerable local network six years before structural upgrades are complete will cause immediate, severe operational failure. The financial burden of correcting these network failures will be unfairly forced onto the existing local ratepayers who derive zero benefit from this private development.

3. CATCHMENT-WIDE DOWNSTREAM CASCADES, SCALE OF DEVALUATION, AND CIVIC ACCOUNTABILITY VACUUM

The catastrophic risk of this development is not contained within the immediate borders of Ohoka village; it poses a direct, systemic threat to highly vulnerable downstream catchments, scaling into a regional economic disaster. Stormwater and displaced groundwater from the proposed 154-hectare footprint naturally follow the low-lying regional topology directly into the wider drainage network feeding urban residential zones, most notably the high-density Silverstream subdivision and West Kaiapoi catchment areas. When evaluating the physical and financial realities of this catchment, this panel is looking at an imminent threat to the housing and insurance stability of roughly 600 to 1,000+ existing homes.

The applicant's brand-new 9 September 2026 amendments explicitly admit to "significant inflow during flooding events" into the local wastewater network. By forcing an unsustainable, high-density suburban footprint onto unyielding clay soil upstream, the developer will inevitably overload the downstream capacities of the Waimakariri District Council infrastructure. When these systems back up, private global insurers will utilise automated, localised street-by-street risk profiling to protect their capital. They do not require regulatory permission to issue an immediate "insurance retreat"—either by stripping flood coverage entirely or skyrocketing premiums to un-payable levels to force a voluntary policy drop. If 600 to 1,000 homes lose their insurance coverage, they instantly become un-mortgageable, erasing hundreds of millions of dollars in generational family equity overnight. The fast-track mechanism creates an engineered loophole where nobody is legally responsible for the fallout, leaving the financial ruin trapped entirely on individual property owners.

4. COMPLETE ABSENCE OF MANDATORY GROUND WATER AND AQUIFER TESTING

The applicant has completely failed to meet the legal burden of proof regarding water safety. The Panel Convener, Jane Borthwick, has already formally recorded that no test bores or localised flow testing have been undertaken for the proposed community water supply. This high-density

development directly threatens the shallow, unconfined first aquifer that every local household bore draws from. The applicant has provided zero long-term hydrogeological modelling to exclude the risk of drawdown or contamination to our community's primary water source. Because they are legally locked out of the heavily overallocated deep second aquifer by Environment Canterbury (ECan) allocation limits, they have no viable, safe, or legally compliant water source.

5. HOUSING SUFFICIENCY AND VIOLATION OF DISTRICT HOUSING STRATEGIES

The Fast-track Approvals framework was strictly legislated to facilitate projects of genuine national or significant regional significance. This private, profit-driven subdivision does not fit this category. The Waimakariri District Council has already meticulously assessed the region's land through its standard District Plan process, deliberately selecting appropriate, serviced urban boundaries to comfortably meet long-term housing demands. There is no shortfall in local housing supply that justifies bypassing local democracy, and any minor economic stimulus or short-term construction revenue generated by this development is completely cancelled out by the permanent, catastrophic destruction of livelihoods and property values in the historical Ohoka village.

6. THE DESTRUCTION OF LOCAL DECISION-MAKING AND WASTE OF SUBSTANTIAL RATEPAYER CAPITAL

This fast-track application represents a direct and deeply frustrating assault on the core principles of local democracy and local decision-making. The Waimakariri District Council has already meticulously evaluated this exact 154-hectare footprint twice before. Acting in accordance with its long-term Rural Residential Development Strategy—which deliberately discounted Ohoka for high-density growth due to verified flooding hazards—the Council formally rejected this proposal twice for very clear, evidence-based planning reasons. This was a democratic process backed by a record-breaking 648 public submissions, of which an overwhelming 96% were firmly opposed.

The financial cost of defending our village from this aggressive proposal has placed a massive, unfair burden on local ratepayers. Running a comprehensive, multi-week independent panel hearing under the Resource Management Act is a major financial undertaking. Between contracting independent expert lawyers, commissioning independent hydrology peer reviews, employing engineering reporting specialists, and paying the hourly fees of high-level independent commissioners, hearings of this magnitude routinely cost local ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Furthermore, this proposal completely ignores the district's strategic, long-term infrastructure investments. The Waimakariri District Council has been working in lockstep with the community to establish the draft North East Waimakariri Urban Plan, deliberately positioning future high-density growth cells in Woodend, Ravenswood, and Pegasus. This is precisely where central government has just fully committed 800 million dollars to construct the massive new Belfast to Pegasus Motorway and Woodend Bypass. Sensible, sustainable urban planning requires that high-density housing developments be integrated alongside these massive public transit investments to utilise modern freight, roading, and service networks. For the developer to reject these designated urban corridors and attempt to dump an 879-lot urban density footprint in the middle of a rural paddock, completely isolated from highway networks and dependent entirely on country roads, defies all logic.

For the developer to simply discard that exhaustive, locally funded democratic outcome and use a fast-track political backdoor to force this un-serviced, flood-prone footprint onto our community is

highly inappropriate. It strips away our community's self-determination and forces local ratepayers to absorb enormous, compounding financial losses just to protect our homes from private corporate gain. The panel must honor the rigorous local assessments already conducted at great public expense, align development with the district's actual motorway infrastructure investments, and decline this application.

The Fast-Track Expert Panel must not allow the applicant to substitute empty engineering promises for hard, baseline physical data. The fatal constraints that saw this project rejected twice before remain entirely unresolved by the 9 September 2026 amendments. I strongly urge the Panel to uphold the local council regulations, protect our community's water and financial insurability, and decline the application in its entirety.

Your sincerely,

Andrew Wallace

