

Your Comment on the Ōhoka Residential Subdivision

Please include all the contact details listed below with your comments and indicate whether you can receive further communications from us by email to substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)			
First name	Gordon Charles and Suzanne		
Last name	Alexander		
Postal address	██████████ ██████ ██████████		
Home phone / Mobile phone	██████████ ██████████	Work phone	
Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)	████████████████████		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
Yes	I can receive emails and my email address is correct	☐	I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct

Please provide your comments below, include additional pages as needed.

1. Introduction

We have lived on our property on Whites Road at Ohoka for 34 years. We are a married couple who are 70+ and we do not have any dependant relatives.

We chose Ohoka as a place to live for its proximity to Christchurch, metropolitan area and airport, while providing a quiet rural setting with a mix of working rural businesses, small holdings and village residential properties. By and large, that mix has continued throughout our time here with subdivisions for additional residences fitting in with the established fabric of the village and its rural environs.

What Ohoka does not need or have the capacity to support, is an intensive residential and commercial development on the scale proposed by the Carter Group in FTA231. Quite apart from the hard evidence of

the unsuitability of the identified parcel of land for this proposal, it smacks of unbridled arrogance on the part of the developer to suggest to the local community that this development will enhance the village of Ohoka.

The development does not fit into the Waimakariri District Council Long Term Plan and has twice been rejected by independent commissioners. While the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 is a legitimate pathway for this development, it is absolutely not in the spirit of democracy and fair play, rather it is the next stage in a process of coercion on the part of the Carter Group to ride roughshod over public opinion and fair process on the part of the statutory authority that we pay our rates to.

We are absolutely opposed to this development going ahead in its present form and request that the Panel take note of the myriad of unsuitable factors and almost universal objection to it proceeding.

2. Flooding

Summary: flood risk here is real, recent and local, and the applicant's flood modelling has not been independently tested. Once 850+ homes are built, any error cannot be undone.

We have lived at [REDACTED], Ohoka since 1993. Our property is directly across Whites Road from the application site. There have been several occasions when floodwater has covered Whites Road in front of our property, but in July 2023 surface water again covered [REDACTED] [REDACTED] That is our letterbox, with the proposed development on the other side of the fence behind it.

The applicant says the site is outside the Council's mapped 1-in-200-year flood hazard area. That map does not reflect what we see on the ground: high groundwater, springs, and surface ponding that sits on these paddocks for weeks after heavy rain. Long-standing locals describe this land as old swamp country, and our own drains run for weeks after rain.

Replacing a large area of pasture with roofs, roads and driveways will change where water goes and how fast it gets there. We are downstream. If the stormwater system does not perform as modelled, the consequences fall on us and our neighbours, not the developer. The Council's own engineers have said the stormwater proposal is not adequate as it stands, and the Applicant's modelling has not been independently peer reviewed.

We ask the Panel to: (a) not accept the Applicant's flood and groundwater modelling at face value and obtain independent peer review before reaching a decision; and (b) treat unresolved downstream flood risk to existing homes as a significant adverse impact. This is not something imposed conditions can fix after the event.

3. Rural Character & Amenity

Summary: this is not an extension of Ohoka. At roughly eight times the size of the existing village, this proposed development would replace it.

We chose to live here 34 years ago for the space, the quiet, dark night skies, and the ability to use our land as we wished within council zoning stipulations. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Under this proposal that outlook would become a very high wooden fence and the backs of houses.

The change to our day-to-day life would be permanent with all the attendant consequences consistent with a development of this size.

Planting and setbacks can soften the edges of a development, but they cannot make 850+ houses, a retirement village and a commercial centre rural in nature. The loss of the Ohoka village's character is an adverse impact that no condition can mitigate, and it falls entirely on the existing community.

4. Infrastructure

Summary: the Council's own engineers say the stormwater and wastewater proposals are not adequate as they stand. Key servicing questions should be answered before a decision, not left to conditions.

Our property relies on a private bore for drinking and stock water, and a septic tank for wastewater treatment. We are concerned about the effect of large-scale earthworks, stormwater discharges and any dewatering on local groundwater levels and quality. We have already noticed lower levels in our bore in dry summers. If our bore is affected, we have no alternative supply.

The site is not part of the Council's planned wastewater network. Servicing it means new pipelines and pumping stations in a rural area, with the associated risk of overflows and odour, and long-term costs that ratepayers will ultimately carry.

We drive Whites Road and Mill Road daily. These are narrow rural roads with footpaths only on a small section of Mill Road, little or no street lighting, a school bus stop, and regular cyclists and horse riders. Adding 850+ homes to the village area could add several thousand vehicle trips a day to roads that were never designed for them, and there is no public transport to offer an alternative.

An approval that leaves core infrastructure to be 'worked out later' through conditions shifts the risk onto neighbours and ratepayers. We ask the Panel to treat the unresolved servicing issues as significant Adverse Impacts in their own right.

5. Insurability Risk

Summary: any worsening of flood risk downstream threatens our ability to insure, finance and sell our home. That cost is real, and it is not counted anywhere in the Applicant's benefits.

Insurers increasingly price risk using their own flood models, including surface water, rather than Council hazard maps alone. If this development increases runoff or ponding downstream, homes like ours are likely to be re-rated. Banks require insurance for a mortgage, so if cover becomes unaffordable or unavailable, our property becomes harder to sell and our equity is put at risk.

This is a direct financial cost that existing residents would bear, it is not something we can mitigate ourselves, and it is not offset by any benefit the development offers us. We ask the Panel to weigh it as an Adverse Impact.

6. Absence of Net Economic Benefits

Summary: the Panel should look at net benefits, not gross benefits. Most of the claimed benefit from the proposed development would happen anyway, elsewhere in the district, where the infrastructure is already planned and paid for.

The Fast Track Act allows an application to be declined where its Adverse Impacts are out of proportion to its regional or national benefits. That makes the size of the real benefit critical.

Housing demand in Waimakariri is already being met in Rangiora, Kaiapoi and Woodend, where the Council has planned and invested for growth. Construction jobs and new homes built at Ohoka would largely be jobs and homes moved from those areas, not new ones. The genuine net gain to the region is therefore far smaller than the headline figures provided by the Applicant suggest.

Against that modest net benefit sit real costs: servicing a site outside the planned network, a car-dependent community with no public transport, pressure on local schools, and long-term liabilities for ratepayers. As a ratepayer, I do not want to subsidise infrastructure for a site the Council never planned to service.

In our view the benefits of this project are neither significant nor genuinely regional, and they do not come close to justifying the Adverse Impacts described in this submission.

7. Anything Else

Construction effects: years of dust, noise and heavy vehicles directly across the road

Summary: a staged development of this size could mean a decade of construction beside existing homes. That is not a short-term inconvenience; it is a sustained Adverse Impact on neighbours.

Dust. Canterbury nor'westers will carry dust from stripped earthworks straight across neighbouring properties.

Noise. Earthworks machinery, reversing alarms and trucks from early morning, six days a week, for years will result from the proposed construction. I work from home from an office that is not soundproofed.

Heavy vehicles. Truck-and-trailer units on narrow rural roads, damaged road edges, mud on the road, and real risk to children waiting at the school bus stop on Whites Road will result.

In conclusion, we ask the Panel to decline this Application. A very similar development has already been tested on its merits twice (Private Plan Change 31 and the District Plan Review), where independent decisionmakers heard expert evidence on these same flooding, servicing and character issues and found the effects unacceptable. Nothing about the site nor the proposed development has changed. The Adverse Impacts on our property and our community are significant, they cannot be adequately mitigated by any conditions, and they are out of proportion to the limited net regional benefit of the project.

8. Photos





How to Submit This Form

Your comments must be received by the Fast-track Team by 12 October 2026. Email is the preferred method — you can attach this completed form as a PDF or Word document.

Email (preferred): substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz — put “Ōhoka Residential Subdivision” in the subject line.

Post: Ōhoka Residential Subdivision Fast-track Application, Environmental Protection Authority, Private Bag 63002, Wellington 6140.

In person: Stewart Dawson's Corner, 366 Lambton Quay, Wellington 6011.