
MINUTE 1 OF THE EXPERT PANEL
Invitations to comment
Ōhoka Residential Subdivision FTAA-2606-1253
14 September 2026

[1] This minute addresses invitations to comment on the application under section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act).

[2] The Expert Panel (Panel) records that it undertook an initial site visit on 4 September 2026 followed by attendance at an Applicant led project overview conference later that day. The purpose of the conference was to familiarise the Panel with the content of the application for consents and provide clarification of aspects of the application. The Panel confirms that the site visit and project overview conference were prior to finalising the invitations to comment on this application.

Persons who must be invited

[3] In accordance with section 53(2) of the Act, the Expert Panel must invite comments from persons listed in sections 53(2) (a) to (n) of the Act.

[4] Canterbury Regional Council ('Environment Canterbury') and Waimakariri District Council as the relevant local authorities have been identified pursuant to section 53(2)(a) of the FTAA. Sections 53(2)(d) to (g) and section 53(2)(l) do not apply to this application. The Panel considers the persons identified in **Appendix 1** must be invited for comment.

[5] Section 53(2)(h) and (i) state that the owners and occupiers of the land

adjacent to the land the application relates to must be Treaty settlement entities, namely Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Te be invited to comment.

[6] The Application included an appendix (Appendix 10: Details and map of adjacent landholdings to the site). The EPA has also provided its advice to the Panel based on the Guidance Note entitled: FTA Guidance Material Identifying Adjacent Land.

[7] ‘Adjacent’ is described in *Strouds Judicial Dictionary of Words and Phrases (10th Edn)*, “*Adjacent is not a word to which a precise and uniform meaning is attached by ordinary usage. It is not confined to places adjoining and it includes places close to, or near. What degree of proximity would justify the application of the word is entirely a question of circumstance.*”

[8] ‘Adjacent’ is defined in the Cambridge dictionary as meaning “very near, next to, or touching” and in the Merriam Webster as meaning “not distant.” Therefore, the word ‘adjacent’ connotes nearness, but does not require a thing (land in this instance) to be physically adjoining. Rather, for land to be adjacent, it must be adjoining or nearby¹.

[9] The Panel has also read and adopts the same principled approach taken by the Fast Track Panel in Sunfield² in determining land that is ‘nearby’ or in sufficient proximity to be included under Section 53(2) (h) and (i). The focus of the purpose of the Act is the facilitation of the delivery of development projects with significant regional or national benefits. The use of the words “facilitation” and “delivery” in the Act’s purpose supports an interpretation of the word ‘adjacent’ beyond adjoining e.g. ‘nearby’ or in ‘close proximity’, that is constrained.

[10] After interpreting the word ‘adjacent’ in the context of the FTAA and its purpose, considering the Appendix 10 information from the Applicant and advice

¹ FTA Guidance Material Identifying Adjacent Land.

² https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/7067/Sunfield-Panel-Minute-2.pdf

from the EPA, having undertaken a site visit and reviewing other application material, the Panel has determined that the owners and occupiers of land shaded orange and purple on the Maps in Appendix 2 and listed in Appendix 3 should be invited to comment. In relation to the matter of relevant portfolio ministers under section 53(2)(j), the Panel considers that the ministerial portfolios for Transport, Education, Seniors, Conservation, Arts, Culture and Heritage, Regional Development, Building and Construction, and South Island are relevant and their respective Ministers should be invited to comment, in addition to the Minister for the Environment.

[11] Relevant iwi authorities, namely Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. See s 53(2)(b).

[12] Relevant Treaty Settlement entities, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga and Whitiara Centre Limited. See s 53(2)(c).

Section 53(3) of the FTAA

[13] Section 53(3) of the FTAA gives the Panel discretion to invite comments from "any other person the panel considers appropriate". Whilst the discretion is broadly framed, the Panel must exercise its discretion in a principled way. The Panel Conveners' Practice and Procedure Guidance Note³ gives some guidance to Panels on matters to consider when exercising this discretion:

³ Dated 22 July 2025

11.3 The Panel Conveners recommend that panels take a principled approach to the exercise of the discretion in section 53(3). The panel should consider the following matters when determining whether to invite other persons to provide comment:

- (a) the purpose of the Act and the procedural principles set out in section 10;
- (b) any relevant aspect of the public or community interest that requires consideration;
- (c) the comprehensiveness and quality of the applicant's technical information and how the applicant has addressed the issue of consultation;
- (d) the likely extent of local authority participation in the application process;
- (e) whether the activity would otherwise be prohibited under relevant legislation
- (f) whether the application is for a project that has been previously declined under another statutory process;
- (g) whether the application is likely to involve novel or contentious legal or disputed factual issues; and
- (h) any other matter that, in the opinion of the Panel, ought to be considered.

[14] The Panel has had regard to this Guidance. The Panel has also noted the Applicant has engaged with a number of persons regarding the substantive application as set out in Appendix 8 of the application. The Panel has determined that it is appropriate to invite comments from the following parties:

- (a) Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA)
- (b) Ōhoka Residents Association
- (c) Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ)
- (d) Te Mana Ora - National Public Health Service
- (e) Transpower NZ.

[15] The Panel considers an invitation for comments from the above parties represents a relevant part of the public interest that requires consideration and so invites comment from them.

[16] Ōhoka Residents Association has been actively involved in the previous statutory processes related to this project and has acted as a collective local community representative on behalf of residents' interests throughout these processes. The Panel is aware of the contentious nature of the project and the degree of local resident community opposition to this project with several disputed factual issues. The Panel considers that in these circumstances it is appropriate to

exercise its discretion to invite this party to provide comments to the Panel.

[17] The panel notes for completeness that it received several requests for other parties to be invited to make comments. The Panel declines to exercise its discretion to invite comments from other parties that are not listed above, which includes the District Council's request to include comments from the Ōhoka Oxford Community Board.

[18] The Panel's reasons for declining to exercise its discretion relate to those parties not being identified as 'adjacent' under Section 53 (h) and (i) and the Panel also took into consideration that those parties' comments can be included in comments from the Council and/or the Ōhoka Residents Association.

Directions

[19] Section 54(1) of the Act requires that the Panel must specify in the invitation a date for when comments must be received by the EPA on behalf of the Panel (which must be 20 working days after the date on which the invitation is given under section 53).

[20] The date invitations to comments will be issued will be **14 September 2026**. Comments must be made to the EPA:

- (a) by email to substantive@fasttrack.govt.nz;
- (b) by post to Private Bag 63002, Wellington 6140, New Zealand; or
- (c) in person to Stewart Dawson's Corner, 366 Lambton Quay, Wellington 6011 .

[21] Comments must be received by **12 October 2026**.

[22] The application may be accessed on the Fast-track website here: <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/Ohoka-residential-subdivision>

[23] The Panel notes the Applicant has filed updated information on 10 September 2026 in advance of the Panel issuing invitations to comment under section 53, so that the parties invited to comment (Parties) have these documents when preparing their comments. The documents have been uploaded to the EPA website on 14 September 2026 and are available to the Parties.

Panel questions

[24] The Panel has identified in Appendix 4 matters on which it would particularly appreciate assistance. The questions are not exhaustive, and their identification should not be taken as expressing any preliminary view about the merits of the application or the existence, magnitude or significance of any particular effect or impact. The due date for any response to these questions by commenters is the same date directed as the last day for comments, **October 12, 2026**.

[25] Commenters are encouraged, where practicable, to:

- (a) identify the part of the application, technical report or proposed condition to which the comment relates;
- (b) state whether they agree or disagree with the applicant's assessment and explain why;
- (c) identify any material information gap, uncertainty or disputed assumption;
- (d) provide supporting evidence or technical material;
- (e) propose specific amendments to the proposed conditions or other practicable measures that would address the matter raised (preferably as tracked changes to the Applications proposed conditions);
- (f) identify with any technical expert reports or comments material if it formed part of evidence provided through previous RMA statutory processes related to the subject site, such as the Waimakariri Proposed Plan or private plan change 31 to the Waimakariri District Plan. Areas

of agreement or disagreement reached between the experts on a particular matter through the previous RMA process; identify any material statutory, legal precedent or factual differences under the FTAA process that affect prior areas of agreement or disagreement made under the previous RMA process.

[26] The Fast-track website will be updated as information is made available to the Panel.

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a stylized, cursive 'K' followed by a long horizontal line.

Kate Barry-Piceno

Ōhoka Residential Subdivision Expert Panel Chair

Appendix 1 – Parties invited to comment under section 53(2) of the Act

53(2)(a)	the relevant local authorities	Waimakariri District Council Canterbury Regional Council
53(2)(b)	the relevant iwi authorities	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
53(2)(c)	any relevant Treaty settlement entities, including, to avoid doubt, — (i) an entity that has an interest under a Treaty settlement within the area to which the substantive application relates; and (ii) an entity operating in a collective arrangement, provided for under a Treaty settlement, that relates to that area	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Te Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga Whitiora Centre Limited
53(2)(h)	owners of the land to which the substantive application relates	Refer Appendix 2
53(2)(i)	occupiers of the land to which the substantive application relates unless, after reasonable inquiry, an occupier cannot be identified	Refer Appendix 2
53(2)(j)	The Minister for the Environment and other relevant portfolio Ministers	Minister for the Environment Minister of Transport Minister of Education Minister for Seniors

		Minister of Conservation Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage Minister for Regional Development Minister for Building and Construction Minister for the South Island
53(2)(k)	relevant administering agencies	Department of Conservation Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
53(2)(m)	if the approvals sought in the substantive application include— (i) an approval described in section 42(4)(a) or (d) (resource consent or designation), the persons and groups listed in clause 13 of Schedule 5: (iv) an approval described in section 42(4)(h) (wildlife approval), the persons listed in clause 4 of Schedule 7:	Director-General of Conservation New Zealand Conservation Authority Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board New Zealand Fish and Game Council Game Animal Council

Appendix 2 – Map of land whose owners and occupiers are invited to comment under section 53(2)(h) and (i)

Ōhoka Residential Subdivision Map



Appendix 3 – List of land parcels whose owners and occupiers are invited to comment under section 53(2)(h) and (i)

Owners of the land to which the substantive application relates (green)
347 Whites Road
Owners of the adjacent land (orange and purple)
Land that has a common boundary with the land to which the substantive application relates and is considered adjacent (shown orange):
231 Whites Road
507 B Mill Road
344 Bradleys Road
241 Whites Road
290 Bradleys Road
403 Whites Road
511 Mill Road
166 Bradleys Road
154 Bradleys Road
509 Mill Road
239 Whites Road
237 Whites Road
507 & 507 A Mill Road
178 Bradleys Road
334 Bradleys Road
338 Bradleys Road
547 Mill Road
205 Whites Road
Land that does not have a common boundary but is close enough to form part of the context of the application site and could be considered adjacent (shown purple):
372 Whites Road
272 Whites Road
336 B Whites Road
498 Mill Road
532 Mill Road
522 Mill Road
306 Whites Road
503 Mill Road
308 Whites Road
304 Whites Road
350 Whites Road
524 Mill Road
505 Mill Road
324 Whites Road
352 Bradleys Road
504 Mill Road
296 Whites Road

546 Mill Road
 554 Mill Road
 251 Bradleys Road
 205 Bradleys Road
 254 Whites Road
 211 Bradleys Road
 231 Bradleys Road
 215 Bradleys Road
 540 Mill Road
 338 Whites Road
 401 Whites Road
 334 Whites Road
 536 Mill Road
 336 Whites Road
 508 Mill Road
 138 Bradleys Road
 290 Whites Road
 301 Bradleys Road
 278 Whites Road
 344 Whites Road
 493 Mill Road
 419 Whites Road
 342 Whites Road
 348 Whites Road
 268 Whites Road
 230 Whites Road
 542 Mill Road
 526 Mill Road
 413 Whites Road
 544 Mill Road
 520 Mill Road
 528 Mill Road

Occupiers of the adjacent land (orange and purple)

Land that has a common boundary with the land to which the substantive application relates and is considered adjacent (shown orange):

178 Bradleys Road
 511 Mill Road
 507 A Mill Road
 507 B Mill Road
 237 Whites Road
 231 Whites Road

Land that does not have a common boundary but is close enough to form part of the context of the application site and could be considered adjacent (shown purple):

211 Bradleys Road
 231 Bradleys Road
 512 Mill Road
 520 Mill Road
 522 Mill Road
 528 Mill Road

Appendix 4 - Matters on which the Panel particularly invites comment

The Panel invites comments on any matter relevant to the application and approvals sought. Without limiting that general invitation, the Panel would particularly appreciate focused comments on the following matters:

1. Strategic urban form: The relationship of the proposal with the planned settlement pattern under the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement, Greater Christchurch Spatial Plan and district planning framework; and any effects of accommodating substantial urban growth at Ōhoka rather than in identified growth areas.
2. Housing demand and benefits: The evidence of location-specific demand for housing at Ōhoka; the contribution of existing zoned, consented and Fast-track capacity elsewhere in Waimakariri and Greater Christchurch; and the certainty, timing and nature of the housing and retirement-living benefits claimed.
3. Potable water supply: The feasibility, capacity, resilience and long-term ownership of the proposed staged water-supply solution; effects of the proposed bores on existing groundwater users, springs, wetlands and surface water.
4. Dewatering and stream depletion: the conceptual hydrogeological model used ; whether cumulative depletion effects on the Ōhoka Stream, its tributaries, springs and wetlands have been adequately assessed, including from any long-term subsoil drainage required.
5. Waterways, wetlands and ecology: Whether all affected waterways, springs and natural inland wetlands have been correctly identified and effects quantified accurately; whether avoidance of loss and modification has been adequately considered.
6. Stormwater and flooding: Whether the modelling adequately represents groundwater, drainage, climate-change and flood conditions; whether filling, earthworks and urbanisation could increase flooding or drainage effects on

adjacent or downstream land.

7. Wastewater and infrastructure: Whether sufficient wastewater capacity is available for each stage; the timing, funding, ownership and operation of necessary on-site and off-site infrastructure.
8. Transport: Whether the transport assessment adequately accounts for the full development, including the retirement village, local centre and projected increases to local school rolls; the effects on the local and State highway networks;
9. Proposed conditions: Whether the proposed staging coordinates development with the delivery of transport, including walkways and cycling routes, three waters, education and community infrastructure; whether costs and long-term liabilities are appropriately allocated; and whether the proposed conditions provide sufficient mitigation and are certain, enforceable and supported by stage-linked triggers.
10. Commenters are encouraged to identify the evidence supporting their position and, where they identify an issue, to propose practicable amendments to the conditions or other measures that may address it.