

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	Mervyn		
Last name	Emms		
Postal address			
Home phone / Mobile phone		Work phone	N/A
Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)			

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
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Please provide your comments below, include additional pages as needed.

Submission Details

- My name is Mervyn Emms, and I reside at [REDACTED] I have owned this property for 54 years, having bought in 1972 and then built my house in 1974. We bought in this location for the peace and quiet of its rural setting, the rural character of the Ohoka Village and the sense of belonging to a community that Ohoka provided, with all of us as neighbours working and living together. I was blessed with the opportunity to raise my 3 children at my home in Ohoka, all of whom attended the [REDACTED]
- I make this submission as an Affected Party to Application FTA231 (Proposed Ohoka Subdivision - Carter Group Ltd.) as my property is located immediately adjacent to the Application area.

5. I have several concerns about the proposed development in Ohoka covered by Application FTA231 and believe the Application should be declined. My concerns which I would like the Panel reviewing this Application to consider are outlined below.
6. During my 54 years at my property, I have witnessed numerous significant flooding events that clearly indicate that the proposed development site should be considered a flood -prone area. A recent example is shown by the photographs included as Appendix A, taken in August 2024 just to the north of my property along Whites Road, facing towards the proposed development area.
7. It has long been known by local residents that the proposed development site is very wet ground, with a normally very high water table and the presence of several springs and surface water flow areas. We have also often observed increased groundwater discharge from the known springs, as well as an increase in the number of springs, after significant regional rainfall events upstream of the proposed site.
8. I am concerned that the proposed subdivision will increase flood risk to existing residents and property during significant rainfall events.
9. My property is often affected by surface flooding during significant rainfall, particularly if the drains in front of my property are not adequately cleared, and I am worried that my property could be affected by increased runoff from the development area.
10. I have also observed significant downstream flooding in the Ohoka Village and downstream as far as the Silverstream Subdivision. This flooding significantly impacts road access and creates other potential risks for the community.
11. The Waimakariri District Council has publicly stated they do not support the connection of the proposed subdivision's wastewater discharge to the Council operated system servicing Ohoka and surrounding areas. Many properties in the area, such as my own, have self-contained waste disposal systems, and increased surface runoff could materially affect the efficiency of these systems.
12. I have read in the Applicant's documents that several deep water bores will be required for the development's water supply. While I have personally observed shallow water bore testing being undertaken at the proposed site, it is not clear if deep water bore testing has been undertaken to determine any potential drawdown impacts on nearby properties which rely on their own bores for water supply, such as my property.
13. The studies supporting the Application have indicated a significant increase in vehicle traffic that would result from the proposed development. The roading network surrounding the Village of Ohoka is not designed nor adequate for this increased traffic flow, and will require significant upgrading, particularly at key intersection points along Mill Road, Jacksons Road, Bradleys Road and Tram Road.
14. At present, the public road verges around the Ohoka Village are used by local foot traffic, and are often used for horse riding as well as by many in the community on weekends. The roads and verges are especially very busy during the Friday Market in the Village. The significant increase in vehicles will make continued use of the verges very dangerous if not impossible, significantly impacting the amenity values of the community.

15. It is not clear what the Region gains from this development happening at Ohoka that it would not gain from the same dwellings being built at areas the Council's District Plan has identified for population growth, and where the Council has developed or has plans to provide the required infrastructure.
16. The Council has committed approximately \$700 million in infrastructure investment over the next 10 years, the majority of which has been directed at growth locations in Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Oxford and Woodend that the District Plan Review identified as appropriate for small lot housing development.
17. The proposed Ohoka development covered by Application FTA231 is not required to meet the District's future population growth, and if additional infrastructure not currently available to support this development is required, providing the additional infrastructure will significantly increase the burden on Waimakariri District rate payers.
18. I also consider that FTA231 should be declined considering that substantially the same development has already been tested through two independent planning processes already, being declined on both occasions. These included a Private Plan Change Application (PC31) process in 2023 as well as an appeal against the revised District Plan in 2025.
19. FTA231 is not a fresh assessment of an unknown site. It is a third attempt to secure approval for substantially the same development on the same land after two independent, evidence-based planning processes concluded the proposed development should not proceed. I consider the continued efforts to develop what has already been judged to be an unwanted and unnecessary development to be grossly unfair to the local residents.
20. Ohoka is a small rural village, with a township of only around 100 dwellings, set within a rural and rural-lifestyle landscape of pasture, shelterbelts and large-lot living, extending along Whites Road, Jacksons Road, Mill Road, Bradleys Road and Tram Road.
21. The rural character of the Ohoka area has been retained through a deliberate planning approach reflected in the site's Rural zoning under the Operative District Plan, and its intended Rural Lifestyle zoning under the revised and now partially operative District Plan, both of which anticipate large-lot rural living, not urban-density residential subdivision.
22. The proposal covered by FTA231 would add roughly eight times the number of dwellings currently within the entire Ohoka township. I believe this growth is the wholesale conversion of open rural land into a discrete urban settlement, imposed on a village that has never been planned, serviced or resourced for that scale of population.
23. Publicly, the Council has confirmed that its continued opposition to this proposed development is driven in significant part by the change the proposal would bring to Ohoka's rural character, alongside drainage and transport concerns, and that the District Plan Review and the Council's Rural Residential Development Strategy specifically considered Ohoka and found it unsuitable for this scale of development.
24. The loss of rural character and amenity at Ohoka is not a matter of subjective taste or generalised resident preference, but is also a concern identified by consideration of detailed planning evidence at previous hearings.
25. My family bought in Ohoka because of the rural character of Ohoka, with its village feel, its proximity to nature, its birdlife, its majestic night sky and view of the Southern Alps, the ability

to walk along the road verge to the Domain for the Friday Market and the peace and quiet of its rural surrounds, amongst many other features. These are the type of amenities the residents of Ohoka enjoy.

26. These amenities will be severely disrupted or destroyed by significant increases in vehicle traffic, long term construction noise and dust, loss of local wildlife, loss of the current dark sky environment and uninterrupted views of the mountains that will come with the extensive development proposed.
27. This change in character will be experienced by existing Ohoka residents who will now live adjacent to an 879-lot urban subdivision, a retirement village and a commercial centre, with the traffic, lighting, increased population and other changes that will come with this development.
28. The Applicant has provided a letter from a director of Bayleys Real Estate (Christchurch) indicating a demand for residential property in Ohoka. However, I do not believe demand for residential land in Ohoka is for small, standard subdivision lots, but for lifestyle blocks driven by the current amenity values of the Ohoka district. I know that is why I have remained in Ohoka for over 54 years.
29. **In conclusion, I ask that the Panel decline the proposed development the subject of Application FTA231.**

Mervyn Emms

Ohoka Resident

Appendix A

