

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	Elizabeth		
Last name	Liddell		
Postal address	[REDACTED]		
Home phone / Mobile phone	[REDACTED]	Work phone	[REDACTED]
Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)	[REDACTED]		

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 Elizabeth Liddell, and I live at [REDACTED], with my family. We purchased our property in 2000 and have lived at this address as residents for 21 years. We chose this location because of its rural character, peaceful setting, open outlook and the lifestyle opportunities it provides.
- I make this submission on behalf of my family as an Affected Party to Application FTA231 (Proposed Ōhoka Residential Subdivision - Carter Group Ltd.) under the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024 because our property is directly opposite the proposed development site.

Basis of Submission

- I oppose Application FTA231 and submit that the proposed Ohoka Residential Subdivision should be declined. My reasons are outlined below.

Productive Rural Land

- One of my concerns is the permanent loss of highly productive rural land. The land proposed for the subdivision is not vacant or unused land. It is productive farmland that has been used for agricultural purposes for many years and forms part of the rural landscape that defines Ohoka.

7. When we established our own property, we were required to demonstrate an economic use of the land. As a result, we have always treated our property as a genuine rural holding rather than simply a lifestyle block.
8. We raise cattle for beef production and harvest hay from our land. Farming and productive land use are important parts of our lifestyle and our contribution to the local rural economy.
9. Once this land is urbanised, it can never be returned to productive farming use. I believe the loss of this highly productive farmland has not been given sufficient weight.

Flooding, Groundwater and Drainage Concerns

10. I believe that FTA231 should be declined as the applicant has not adequately shown that the proposed subdivision will not materially increase flooding impacts on existing residents and properties within surrounding areas.
11. During the many years I have resided in Ohoka, I have observed how this land behaves during wet winters and periods of significant rainfall. Based on those observations, I believe the area is naturally prone to water accumulation and flooding.
12. The proposed subdivision site has a high groundwater table, under currents and poor natural drainage. The numerous drains, ditches and watercourses throughout the proposed subdivision site are evidence that the area has poor drainage and prone to flooding.
13. It is common to see water lying on the proposed subdivision site paddocks during winter and after heavy rainfall events. (Refer appendix 1 photo evidence of flooding)
14. The regular presence of ducks and wetland birdlife residing on the proposed subdivision site and surrounding properties, reflects the naturally wet characteristics of the site. These conditions raise significant concerns about the land's suitability for a development of this scale and intensity.
15. Replacing a large area of open farmland with roads, roofs, driveways and other hard surfaces will inevitably change the way water moves through the catchment.
16. I am concerned that increased storm water runoff could worsen flooding issues both on neighbouring properties and within the wider Ohoka area.
17. Given the site's existing high-water table and drainage challenges, I do not believe that storm water management should be left to future design stages. These issues should be comprehensively resolved before any approval is considered.

Traffic, Rural Roads, Cycling and Horse Riding

18. One of the reasons my family chose to live in Ohoka was the rural lifestyle and the ability to safely enjoy outdoor activities on the local road network.
19. We regularly cycle, ride horses and walk along Whites Road. These activities are an important part of our lifestyle and one of the reasons my family chose to purchase property in this area.
20. At present, Whites Road retains a rural character and is used by horse riders (there is a local pony club nearby), walkers, cyclists and local residents who value the ability to safely enjoy the open countryside and quiet roads.
21. The proposed development would introduce traffic associated with approximately 850 new homes, together with a retirement village, commercial centre and associated visitors, service vehicles and construction traffic.

22. I am particularly concerned that activities which are currently part of everyday life in Ohoka, such as riding horses, cycling and walking along rural roads, will become increasingly difficult and potentially unsafe if the proposed development proceeds. The loss of this safe rural environment would represent a significant loss of amenity for both my family and the wider Ohoka community.

Impact on Rural Character and Amenity

23. My family purchased our property because of the qualities that make Ohoka unique.

24. We were attracted by the rural outlook, the open green spaces, the farming landscape, the peace and quiet, and the sense of living within a genuine rural community.

25. The views across open paddocks form a significant part of the amenity value of our property and contribute directly to the lifestyle we sought when we invested in this area.

26. The proposed subdivision would fundamentally alter that environment.

27. Rather than representing gradual growth, the proposal would transform a large area of rural land into a substantial urban settlement consisting of hundreds of houses, a retirement village and commercial activities.

28. Existing residents who chose to live in Ohoka because of its rural character will be the people most affected by this change.

29. The increase in traffic, noise, lighting, construction activity and population would permanently alter the character of the area and diminish the rural lifestyle that currently exists.

Birdlife and Natural Environment

30. Another reason we value living in Ohoka is the abundance of birdlife and wildlife that exists throughout the area.

31. We regularly observe wetland birdlife, and also pheasants, quail, tūī, kingfishers and pūkeko on and around our property and within the farmland surrounding the proposed development site.

32. The open paddocks, shelter belts, drains and wet areas of the proposed subdivision site and surrounding Ohoka areas provide wetland birdlife habitat and feeding opportunities for these species.

33. The presence of these birds adds significantly to the enjoyment of living in Ohoka and contributes to the area's unique rural character.

34. I am concerned that replacing this rural environment with intensive urban development will result in habitat loss and increased disturbance to local wildlife.

35. Once these habitats are removed, the ecological character of the area will be permanently changed.

Previous Planning Decisions

36. The planning history of this site is highly relevant. Application FTA231 represents a third attempt to obtain approval for the same development on the same site. The proposal has already been subject to two independent planning processes, both of which determined that the land unsuitable for this type of large-scale residential development and was declined.

37. Those earlier statutory planning process assessments identified concerns relating to flooding risk, drainage constraints, transport impacts, infrastructure capacity and the impact on the rural identity and character of Ohoka and the historic Ohoka village.

38. I note that recent district planning processes considered future growth needs and identified sufficient development capacity elsewhere in the Waimakariri District, without requiring large-scale urbanisation of this site.

39. I respectfully request that the Panel give significant weight to the previous planning history of this site, including independent technical evidence and expert recommendations considered through the earlier planning processes and decline FTA231.

Inadequate and Unresolved Roading Infrastructure Plan to Support the Proposed Development

40. I submit that FTA231 should be declined because the applicant has not provided sufficient evidence or a plan that the transport and supporting infrastructure can safely and sustainably accommodate a development of this scale.

41. The local roading network, including Whites Road and Mill Road, consists of relatively narrow rural roads with limited capacity, and road marking. The addition of more than 850 homes is likely to generate several thousand additional vehicle movements each day, placing significant pressure on roads that were not designed to accommodate this level of traffic. This raises concerns regarding road safety, traffic congestion, and connections to Tram Road and SH1 interchange.

42. There is currently no public transport servicing this area. As a result, future residents will be heavily dependent on private vehicles, increasing traffic volumes, fuel consumption, and carbon emissions. This outcome appears inconsistent with sustainable growth principles and will place additional demands on existing infrastructure.

43. Importantly, the application appears to lack a fully approved and resolved infrastructure plan. Significant questions remain regarding transport, and the capacity of supporting services required for a development of this scale. In my view, the infrastructure provision is not sufficiently addressed, and the resulting uncertainty creates unacceptable risks for existing residents and the wider community.

Conclusion

44. The proposal would remove highly productive farmland from agricultural use, introduce significant uncertainty regarding flooding and drainage, increase traffic on rural roads, reduce local wildlife habitat and permanently change the rural character that makes Ohoka a desirable place to live.

45. My family invested in Ohoka because of its rural environment and productive farming landscape. After more than twenty-five years of owning property in the area, I do not believe this land is an appropriate location for an urban-scale development of the size proposed.

46. The application does not provide a fully resolved infrastructure plan and therefore does not support sufficient certainty that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered to support a development of this scale.

47. For these reasons I respectfully request that the Panel decline the proposed development under Application FTA231.

Thank you for considering my comments.