

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	James & Charlotte		
Last name	Mason		
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			
☒	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

I live at with my family of five, roughly opposite the proposed development. We moved to Ōhoka in September 2024 from a new housing development in Woodend. We wanted more space and privacy, but also the quieter, closer community that comes with living in a village. Here we know our neighbours and people help each other out.

We spend a lot of time outdoors and enjoy walking by the Ōhoka Stream. Having moved from country Victoria in Australia, I also love having the farmers’ market nearby. The quiet evenings and dark nights, with very little street lighting, are part of why we chose to live here.

I understand that more homes are needed, and I am not against development in general. I am strongly opposed to a development of this size in this location. Around 850+ new homes, along with the other activities proposed, would change the place we moved here to be part of.

2. Flooding

Our land has flooded several times since we moved here. I have photographs from 26 October 2024, 1 May 2025 and 7 September 2026. The water has never reached our house, but it can sit on the land for weeks. I have to pump it to the culvert at the front of our property because the ground does not absorb it.

The Council has put a larger pipe under our driveway. As far as I can see, the driveway pipes upstream and downstream have not been changed in the same way. I am also concerned about how well the culverts along this stretch are maintained. A larger pipe under one driveway only helps if water can move through the rest of the system. If the development is approved, I would like the whole connected drainage route, including the culverts upstream and downstream of all properties in the area, checked and any parts that cannot cope with heavy rain upgraded.

I understand that the updated flood report says the development should not significantly increase flooding at existing homes. But it also says its modelling is for the wider area and cannot predict exactly what will happen at one property. The updated stormwater report says parts of the flood and stormwater systems will be tested together at a later design stage. Those points matter to me because I can show what already happens on our land, it's also concerning in that it's only considered at a later design stage. This is a major concern for local residents. It should be fully resolved before ground is broken. (Appendices 22 and 31).

I would like the Panel to look at our dated photographs and ask for a specific check of [REDACTED] and the nearby culverts. Before the development goes ahead, I want to understand where the water will go in heavy rain, whether it could stay on our land longer, and who will maintain the drainage system over time.

3. Rural Character & Amenity

The proposed development does not look or feel like the Ōhoka we chose to live in. To me, it is closer to a new township than an extension of the existing village. The Domain, farmers' market, open land are things the local community has built its life around. I worry that the scale of this development would change their setting and the way people use them.

I also worry about what we would see and hear from our home. Planting may soften some views eventually, but it will not be mature when construction starts or when the first houses are built. More streetlights and traffic would change the quiet, dark evenings we value.

The project overview points to the landscape and urban design reports in Appendices 23a–23c. I would like the Panel to consider what the development would actually look like, both in its early years and later on. I would also like to know where streetlights will go, how much light will reach existing homes, and what screening will be in place from the start.

4. Infrastructure

Getting into and out of our driveway is already difficult at times. When travelling south on Mill Road, I need to wait for a gap in oncoming traffic and make a wide turn into our driveway. We also reverse out onto Mill Road. On farmers' market days, parked cars make the road busier. More traffic would make these movements harder, and I would be less comfortable crossing the road with our children, bikes and pram.

I also find the Tram Road motorway on-ramp busy now. Many new households would add trips through that area. I would like the transport work to show what happens at the busiest times, on market days, and once the whole development is occupied not just during its first stage. It should look at access to existing driveways, including ours, as well as safe places for families to cross Mill Road (Appendix 15, as identified in the project overview) although ultimately this will destroy the look and feel of a country village.

There is also a private well on our property. Appendix 17a says most of the development would need a new water supply from deep bores, and that the final number and output of those bores will only be known after drilling and testing. I am not saying our well will be affected, but I would like its condition recorded before that work starts. That way, if there is a change later, everyone has a clear starting point. I would also like to know what will happen if a neighbouring well is affected. Once again this is something that will adversely affect the residents if something goes wrong and it won't be fixed over night.

The infrastructure report describes new wastewater and other services for the development (Appendix 14). I would like to see clear answers about their capacity, what happens if a pump or power supply fails, who will maintain the systems, and who will pay for any work needed outside the development. Too many important details seem to be left for later. I would feel more confident if they were worked through before building begins.

5. Insurability Risk

Water has never reached our house, and our insurance has not changed because of flooding. My concern is what could happen in the future if the development makes flooding or drainage problems worse, or if it becomes difficult to show an insurer what the risk at our property actually is.

We already have dated photographs showing water on our land on three occasions. I would like those observations taken seriously alongside the wider flood modelling. A general conclusion about the development area does not tell me enough about 508 Mill Road.

I would like a clear assessment of our property before work starts, followed by a way to check any changes once the development is built. If a problem is found, there should be a clear process for investigating and fixing it. Existing residents should not have to carry the uncertainty on their own (Appendices 22 and 31).

6. Absence of Net Economic Benefits

I accept that building houses creates work and that new homes have value. My question is how much of that benefit depends on building them here, rather than in areas already planned for growth.

The project overview points to Appendix 2 for the claimed economic benefits and Appendix 39 for economic costs. I would like the Panel to look beyond the total jobs and spending figures and ask what this particular location adds. Houses built elsewhere would also create construction work. Meanwhile, this location may need extra spending on roads, water, wastewater, drainage and community services.

I have not seen a clear explanation of who will pay for all of that work or its upkeep in the long term. If some costs fall to the Council, they may ultimately fall to ratepayers, including people who already live here. I also think the loss of the existing village character and the effects on nearby homes deserve weight, even if they are harder to put into a dollar figure.

For me, the case for a net benefit from building at Ōhoka has not been made clearly enough. I would like to see a straightforward comparison with planned growth areas, showing the benefits, costs and who pays for them.

7. Anything Else

I would be open to a much smaller development of the land. Large lifestyle blocks of around ten acres, for example, would be more in keeping with the look and feel of this area. I know even that would bring some change and require services. My concern is the scale of what is currently proposed.

Construction is another worry. Heavy vehicles on Mill Road are already loud enough to wake us. A long period of earthworks and building would add traffic, noise and dust. [REDACTED], and we have installed F7 filters in our house. I do not know whether construction dust would affect him, but I want that possibility taken seriously. I would like clear plans for truck movements, working hours, dust monitoring and what happens when neighbours report a problem. Water used to keep dust down also needs to be managed so it does not add to drainage problems (Appendices 14 and 31; the project overview also identifies Appendix 32a).

I have noticed fewer birds visiting our lawn since a neighbour two doors away brought a cat into the area. I cannot say the cat is the only reason, but it has made me think about what hundreds of new households and their pets could mean for local birds and waterways. I would like the Panel to consider that as part of the wildlife and waterway information identified in the project overview, including Appendix 25.

Finally, Mill Road has been raised by about 200 mm, by my estimate. That has already reduced our privacy. More traffic and construction vehicles could make this more noticeable. I would like the view into our property and any proposed screening to be considered from our side of the road.

For all these reasons, I ask the Panel to decline the application. The flooding, road access, water supply and other effects on existing neighbours need much clearer answers before a development of this size is allowed to proceed.

8. Photos

26 October 2024







1 May 2025





7 September 2026



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.