

Your Comment on the Ohoka Residential Subdivision - FTA 231

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			
I have authority to comment.			
Organisation name (if relevant)			
First name	Christine		
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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
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1. INTRODUCTION

I was brought up on a farm in Springfield underneath the Torlesse Mountain Range. Throughout our life we have worked toward owning our own piece of rural land in Canterbury. This involved saving and saving until we could finally do this. Our block of land, which has views of the mountains I grew up with, was finally purchased in 2003. When driving or walking down our drive we have rural views across farmland and up to the mountains. This is one of the reasons we live here.

This was just the beginning of our journey and life on our land. We planted shelter belts and trees as many as we could afford throughout the years. My husband provided water to most of our trees. A huge project.

Since 2011 when our home was finally built we have continued planting and creating an environment for birds, insects and small creatures.

We have spent over 20 years caring for this land and improving it for the creatures and insects that live here. We love our peaceful bird filled piece of paradise.

This urban subdivision will devastate our peace and quiet rural life that we have worked so hard to establish.

2. FLOODING

When we first moved to Ohoka we had no idea about the extent of flooding in this area. We soon found out. Parts of our land are under water in the winter. I cannot walk or drive a tractor on the grass in winter without being stuck . Although our land looks flat there is a metre difference in drop from Whites Rd end to the east boundary of our property. After rain the water trickles across the land and it can take a day before the true flooding is obvious.

When building our house the water collected against the foundation, turned the clay to mud and the builder could not continue until we had installed drains. We now have a series of drains and pumps that take the water around our house into a huge drain where it is pumped into our pond. The land is surrounded with deep drains. We have a huge drain behind our house which fills to the top after heavy rain. The stream on our property floods when we have heavy rain especially if it is high tide and the water cannot exit. This is scary.

In addition we have a spring down our drive that erupts in heavy rain and water runs like a river down our drive for days. This adds to the water on our land.

We have springs on our property that come up during wet weather and stay for weeks. What will happen to these if the ground water is interfered with. Will they get worse or disappear ? Will our trees die because of too much water or too little water. I don't believe the flooding experts have any idea about the water on our property and the effects of major excavations on the ground water especially our high water table. Sometimes the water table is just under the grass especially in winter. Ohoka is built on a swamp.

The 1-in -200-year flood the developer talks about does not mean a thing in this age of climate change. No one knows where the next flood will occur in New Zealand but it is not clever to build an urban subdivision on a swamp uphill from areas that already flood. Replacing swamp land pasture with roofs, roads and impervious surfaces changes where the water will go. We are downstream from this. If the stormwater design fails we will be flooded. What will happen to our property that we have saved and saved for and worked on for 20 years to develop into a haven for nature ? Who is going to compensate us ?

As an alternative will each section have tanks for stormwater. How many on each section and how will the water be discharged ?

A recent Mill Road subdivision has houses with five or six huge black tanks on each section. They are ugly and not at all what the developer said they would do. They were supposed to have a detention pond for storm water. These properties are an ugly blot on the landscape and certainly do not comply with the statements made regarding '*retaining the rural character*' when the Plan Change was proposed and approved.



I am asking the panel to not accept the subdivision flood and groundwater modelling. The impact on homes downstream is significant and can not be fixed if the development proceeds. The water will already be in our homes.

The flood modelling must look at the intensity of rainfall, water table and underground streams and springs, the amount of rainfall the amount of rain before the event, the Eyre River levels and the tides. How can they say all of these will not occur at the same time ? This is when the risk is greatest and add in climate change and we will be on our roofs waiting to be rescued left with destroyed properties and nowhere to go.

The difference between what has happened during previous storms and what is predicted by the model clearly shows that the model is not accurate.

The fall of the land surrounding the proposed subdivision has not been mentioned in the flood model. If as they say we have 185mm of water on Whites Road it will not be just sitting there. It will be flowing into properties east of Whites Road which are much lower than the farm. This water will flow around and through houses. It will lay on the land for weeks because the area is so poorly drained. If this happens our 20 + year old trees will die. Our

septic tank will be flooded and our wells contaminated. Will we have power because the transformers are at ground level.

The risks of flooding because of the subdivision is unacceptable and on this ground alone the application must be rejected.

3. RURAL CHARACTER & AMENITY

The small rural village of Ohoka is surrounded by large lifestyle blocks owned by people who have moved here for a rural lifestyle. We love the tranquillity and birdsong created by our tree plantings. It is an historic village originally formed to mill grain from surrounding farms and flax from the swamps in the area. Any new development to the area should enhance the form, function and amenity value of the area.

The proposed development is an incongruous adjunct to our village and is certainly not a development that will integrate into the existing environment. It is simply a 'bolt on' and will not be part of the form and fabric of Ohoka Village. It will overwhelm the village area of Ohoka and introduces an unacceptable level of development to the village.

Groups in Ohoka have developed a native bush park adjoining the domain, a flying fox, and playground for young and older children, BBQ for visitors and a community notice board. We are just a very small community. This small domain will be overwhelmed by the 850 households, retirement village and new school. There is not room for all of these people.

At present we can walk or bike along our road but with more than 6000 vehicle movements a day we will be frightened to venture out. Even getting our car out of the driveway will be difficult. This will be a huge change in lifestyle for us.

We can view the night sky because of the dark in Ohoka. With all of these houses and street lighting our viewing will be stopped. This is another of the reasons we live here.

Ohoka has a small country school that is at its maximum capacity. This is a school with country values where the children come from farm type properties with sheep, chickens, cattle and pets. They have pet days, planting in the bush days and other agriculture based education. This development will overwhelm the country nature of the school.

The change to my day to day life would be permanent. There will be noise pollution from so many houses, rubbish on the roads, cats and dogs on our property. We trap rats, possums and wild cats. We shoot rabbits, hares and wild cats. This activity protects our trees and wildlife. Will we have to stop doing this ?

No conditions attached to the proposed development can mitigate the loss of Ohoka Village's character and amenity value.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE

We have two private wells on our property that provide drinking water to our house. Who knows what will happen to the well water levels with earthworks, dewatering and stormwater discharges. No information has been shown to alleviate our concern that our wells will not run dry or will be contaminated. If that happens we will have no water. Will the quality of our water change?

The council has not planned to build wastewater networks so new pipelines will be a cost to the ratepayers. Will each house have a big black ugly tank for wastewater with a macerator in it. Will you be trucking the sewage to whoever will take it? These questions need answers.

Whites Road and Mill Road are narrow country roads with large drains on both sides making them dangerous to navigate in the dark and on foggy nights. We get a lot of fog in the winter because the land is swamp land. These narrow rural roads some without footpaths, no street lighting, school bus stops will be overwhelmed by the traffic from 850 plus houses. There is no public transport. Will the ratepayers have to pick up improvement costs? Can they be widened? Tram Road is again a narrow road which is already difficult to join in morning traffic.

The roading and traffic is a major problem. The disturbance to private wells is a problem. The lack of sewage network is a problem. The lack of water is a problem.

Situating an urban development of this size on good dairy farmland in the middle of nowhere with no water, no waste water, narrow roads and in a swamp which will flood downstream properties is nonsensical. It is a project driven by financial imperatives with no thought given to the effect on the existing residents, the land and the wider implications for the ratepayers who will inevitably incur additional costs due to this proposal. (The Waimakariri District Council has already spent a considerable amount of time and money on submissions in regard to the development. This will never be recovered inspite of proposed amendments to the Act.)

INSURABILITY RISK.

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If our property floods to any greater depth we will not be able to insure it . The insurance companies have already done this in Auckland and Hawkes Bay. Houses will be abandoned. Who picks up the cost for this. The developer, the government or ratepayers.

Insurance prices will increase with increased risk which is a direct cost to existing residents and it is not something we can mitigate. Please don't do this to us.

Our property cannot take any increase in the depth of flooding.

ABSENCE OF NET ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Our council has already planned for housing development in Rangiora, Kaiapoi, and Woodend which will last for the next 30 years. These areas are serviced and are very close to major roading infrastructure. Why would you want to place a development where none of the above exist where there is a likelihood of major damage to existing rural properties and the associated infrastructure ?

The adverse impacts of this development are way out of proportion to the regional or national benefits. The costs of a car dependent community, a site outside the planned network, pressure on school, no public transport, long term liability for ratepayers and damage to existing houses.

The only people this proposed development benefits are the developer and the original landowner. The ratepayers pick up huge costs while the existing properties in the area suffer increased flood risk, increasing costs for insurance or none at all and a destroyed rural environment.

How can this be considered to be a project that offers *significant regional or national benefits* ? The answer to that is that it cannot.

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

Where is the survey of creatures, fish and insects that will be impacted. How many lizards are there in the farm, how many frogs, what fish live in the streams ? What about the frogs. How will the fish survive the pollution and dewatering. Is removing the fish and eels a realistic option ? Will there be water in the streams that run to the Kaiapoi River at all times during the construction ?

The trees on the property represent many years of growth and are an important part of biodiversity of the area. Are they to remain or be ripped out. ?

The impact of noise and dust on our properties has not been considered. Birds in particular take fright when it is noisy. Will they disappear from our property altogether ?

We have finally got bellbirds after years of planting and nurturing. Fantails, silvereyes, quail, harriers, paradise shelduck, mallards, pukeko, yellowhammer, chaffinch, green finch, goldfinch, house sparrow, starling, white-backed magpie, welcome swallow, kingfisher, white-faced heron, thrush, blackbirds are some of the birds we have developed trees and environments for. The introduction of cats and dogs could destroy all of our work.

Dust on our property during a nor'-west could be catastrophic. Our trees and ground will be covered in dust; birds, insects and plants will all be covered in fine clay. Perhaps the developer could come and wash everything down.

MISCELLANEOUS

Our house and windows will get covered in fine dust. The developer should wash our windows , houses and sheds down periodically especially after strong winds.

This development could go on for many years. We could have earthworks and building for 10 - 15 years. This is untenable in an area where we purchased property for a peaceful rural lifestyle.

The development of a shopping centre in competition to one that already exists three minutes away in Mandeville could put people out of business. The Mandeville shops were designated by the council. We don't need another shopping centre.

Building a retirement village in the middle of nowhere will not give the inhabitants freedom to walk or scooter to a variety of venues. They will always be in cars or vans to get anywhere of interest. Also the predicted 300mmm of flooding around this area is not ideal for elderly people, or anyone else.

The polo field looks like it will be a pond when the water table is high. Is there a need for a polo field. When will it be used? The road from the polo field to Whites Road will flood according to the flood model. It will be a river flowing towards Whites Road.

Security of our homes and sheds will diminish, complaints about bonfire smoke and late night farming activities will occur. Rubbish on the roadside will increase. Will we still have mail boxes and rural mail deliveries ?

We don't want this proposed development especially because the council has designated areas close to roads and infrastructure which will cover the growth for 30 years. This project has the potential to flood downstream and many existing properties. It will destroy a special rural area for ever. Many people come out from the city to picnic in our domain. This rural activity will be lost to them when it is overcrowded and beset by noisy traffic.

The well-being of our community is on the line here. Flooding already occurs and it will be much worse according to the developer's model. I have never seen water across Whites Road in the years we have been here yet the developers model says we will have 185mm across Whites Road. This water won't be just sitting there it will be flowing into down hill properties in amounts never seen before. We already have flooding. We cannot cope with increased flooding. To say the effects on flooding will be no more than minor is a falsehood. They cannot predict what will happen to the underground flows, the springs and the water table levels. They have only looked at major rain events. What about including rainfall just prior to these events that make the ground already sodden,, the underground streams flow and a high water table. What about including rainfall prior to these extreme events and include the river flows in the adjacent river systems.

Ohoka has a very complicated underground water system; the flood model carried out by the developer is only considering rainfall. It is at best a half baked model which does not take all the relevant elements into their calculations.

For the sake of the continuing existence of our community and many downstream properties please do not approve this application. It must be rejected.



Christine Docherty