

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	Brydyn		
Last name	Melles		
Postal address			
Home phone / Mobile phone		Work phone	
Email (<i>a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you</i>)			
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

Our homestead is home to [REDACTED] Brydyn Melles [REDACTED] Brydyn are co-owners of the property.

Our aim is to live as sustainably and self-sufficiently as possible. We grow a significant amount of our own food, maintain vegetable gardens and an orchard, and keep dairy & beef cattle and sheep. We also seek to maintain an environmentally responsible lifestyle and provide a healthy environment for the [REDACTED] children to grow up in.

We have lived in Ohoka since 2022. We moved here from Christchurch specifically because of the quiet rural lifestyle and the close-knit nature of the village. This property is our home and was intended to be our long-term, permanent home. It is where we have planned to build our future.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this fast-track application. The proposed development would directly affect our property, our way of life and the wider rural environment in which we have chosen to live.

2. Flooding

The applicant states that the site is outside Waimakariri District Council's mapped 1-in-200-year flood hazard area. However, in 2025 we applied for resource consent to construct a granny flat for the parents of Brydyn Melles [REDACTED]. As part of that process, we were required to ensure that the granny flat was not located within any area mapped as having a 1-in-200-year flood hazard. The same mapped flood-hazard area extends across a significant portion of the proposed development site. In addition, we regularly experience high groundwater levels and surface ponding across our paddocks, sometimes continuing for weeks after significant rainfall.

The proposed development would convert what is currently predominantly pasture into substantial areas of impermeable surface, including roads, paths and roofs. We understand that some areas of the development are proposed to be raised to mitigate flood risk. However, this places considerable reliance on the accuracy of the applicant's flood and stormwater modelling.

If the proposed stormwater system does not perform as modelled, the consequences will not fall on the developer. They would directly affect neighbouring properties and existing homes.

We are particularly concerned that council engineers have raised concerns regarding the adequacy of the proposed stormwater solution and that the applicant's modelling has not been independently peer reviewed.

We therefore ask that the panel:

- a) not rely on the applicant's flood, groundwater and stormwater modelling without independent peer review; and

b) treat any unresolved downstream flood risk to existing homes as a significant adverse effect. Flooding is not an effect that can simply be remedied after the event. If the modelling is incorrect, the consequences may already have occurred before they can be addressed.

3. Rural Character & Amenity

We chose to live in Ohoka because of its quiet rural character. Our property allows us to maintain a large vegetable garden and orchard and keep dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep. Our north-western boundary currently adjoins open paddocks. Although we have trees and vegetation along the boundary, we also have direct views across the surrounding rural landscape. Under the proposed development, those views would instead look across numerous residential properties and houses. We note that under the proposed urban design plan these trees are to be retained and there will be areas of planting underneath, however, even with planting, there will be many years before they are able to fully provide a visual buffer.

The development would also fundamentally alter the character of the area. The quiet, dark night skies that we currently enjoy, and one of the reasons for why we moved out here, would be affected by the introduction of substantial street lighting.

We also raise chicks, goslings and ducklings on the property. In recent years, our neighbours have undertaken a feral-cat trapping programme, which has helped minimise losses of young birds. The introduction of approximately 850 additional homes, together with the associated increase in domestic cats and dogs, creates an additional risk to our livestock and way of life.

This proposal is not simply an extension of the existing Ohoka village. It would fundamentally change the character of the village and surrounding rural area by introducing a development comprising more than 850 houses, a retirement village and a commercial centre. The 2023 New Zealand census stated the Ohoka has 126 houses. This proposal will increase the houses in Ohoka by 675%. That is no longer the Ohoka we know and love.

Planting and other landscaping may soften the visual edges of the development, but they cannot address the fundamental change in land use or restore the rural character that currently exists.

This would have a significant adverse effect on our property and on the wider existing community. In our view, these effects cannot be adequately mitigated through conditions

.4. Infrastructure

Water:

Our property relies on a private bore for drinking and stock water and a septic tank for wastewater treatment.

We are concerned that the large-scale earthworks, dewatering and stormwater discharges associated with the proposed development could affect our access to groundwater. If our bore is adversely affected, we have no alternative water supply.

We also understand that the proposed development is outside the Council's planned wastewater network. The construction and operation of infrastructure associated with the development creates potential risks, including wastewater overflows and odour. We are concerned that the long-term infrastructure costs associated with servicing the development will ultimately be borne by us, the existing ratepayers, rather than the developer.

Roads and traffic:

Members of our household regularly use Whites Road and Mill Road. These are narrow rural roads, with no footpath along Whites Road. There is also a school bus stop, and cyclists and horse riders regularly use these roads. The [REDACTED] children at our property use them frequently for walking and cycling.

The addition of such a large number of dwellings would substantially increase traffic on roads that were not designed for this level of use. There could potentially be several thousand additional vehicle movements each day, with no public transport alternative.

This would create significant safety and amenity concerns for existing road users, particularly children, cyclists and horse riders.

The effects would not be limited to Whites Road and Mill Road. Increased traffic would flow towards Tram Road and onwards towards Christchurch and the connection with State Highway 1. As regular users of these routes during both morning and evening periods, we are concerned that this additional traffic would place significant pressure on existing infrastructure.

Any substantial upgrades required as a consequence of the development should not simply be deferred to future processes or conditions. Leaving essential infrastructure matters unresolved would transfer the risk and potential cost of the development to existing residents and ratepayers.

We therefore ask that the panel treat the unresolved servicing, transport, and infrastructure issues as significant adverse effects in their own right.

5. Economic benefits and planned growth

The proposed development is outside the planned future growth areas identified in the Waimakariri District Plan. This is in addition to the significant growth already occurring in Rangiora, Kaiapoi, and Woodend, where infrastructure and services have been planned and invested in to accommodate population growth.

To the extent that the proposed development provides additional housing, some of that growth would otherwise be accommodated within these existing planned growth areas. The net regional economic benefit is likely to therefore be considerably less than suggested by the applicant.

Against those benefits are significant potential costs, including:

- pressure on local infrastructure;
- additional pressure on schools and community facilities;
- increased dependence on private vehicles;
- the absence of a public transport alternative;

- infrastructure requirements outside the existing planned network; and
- potential long-term costs and liabilities for existing ratepayers.

The purpose of the District Plan is to provide a planned framework for growth and infrastructure investment. This proposal would bypass that established planning framework, particularly given that very similar development proposals have previously been considered and declined through Private Plan Change 31 and the District Plan Review. As a result of the bypassing of established frameworks, a large proportion of the long-term adverse consequences fall on ratepayers and not on the developer.

For these reasons, we consider that the claimed regional economic benefits need to be assessed against the significant infrastructure, environmental, transport and community costs that would result from development in this location.

7. Anything Else

[REDACTED]. A development of this scale could result in many years of construction activity immediately adjacent to our home, including substantial earthworks, construction traffic, dust and noise.

This is not likely to be a short-term construction project. A development of this scale could continue for many years and would have ongoing effects on our household.

We are particularly concerned about noise from earthmoving machinery, trucks, reversing alarms and other construction activities. If construction occurs six days a week and begins early in the morning, it would have a significant impact on our children's learning and on the normal use and enjoyment of our home. We are able to hear whenever the current farmer of the land proposed to be developed is working on his land in the tractor very clearly. In comparison, construction noise is likely to be far more disruptive.

Brydyn [REDACTED] work from home several days a week, meaning that prolonged construction noise would directly affect their ability to work.

We are aware of residents living near another development by the same developer in Lincoln in Selwyn District who have experienced prolonged dust and noise effects during construction (for numerous years). While we acknowledge that this is a different development, their experience gives us additional concern about the potential duration and intensity of construction effects at our property.

Dust and wind:

The prevailing Canterbury nor-west winds are another significant concern. The proposed development is directly north-west of our property, from the direction in which these winds commonly arrive.

We already experience airborne dust during strong nor-west winds. Large-scale construction immediately upwind of our property could substantially increase this problem.

Dust and airborne particles would affect our washing, vegetable gardens, livestock and the general use and enjoyment of our property.

██████████ spend a significant amount of time working in the garden. Having to spend extended periods outdoors with construction machinery, heavy vehicles, noise and airborne dust would significantly affect their daily lives.

Heavy vehicles:

We are concerned about the volume of heavy trucks and trailer units that would use Whites Road during construction.

Whites Road is a rural road and is not designed for sustained heavy construction traffic of this scale. Increased heavy vehicle movements would create additional safety concerns for our children, who regularly walk and cycle along the road. With such an increase of heavy construction traffic, safety concerns would mean that the children would be unable to use the road without adult supervision, thus restricting their ability to live the childhood we moved here for originally.

.8. Conclusion

Taking all of these matters into consideration, we ask that the panel decline the application.

A very similar development has previously been considered on its merits through two separate processes, with independent decision-makers hearing expert evidence on many of the same issues raised in this submission. Those processes concluded that the effects were unacceptable.

As we understand it, there has been no fundamental change to the scale or nature of the development that would address those concerns.

For our family, this proposal would have significant and ongoing effects on our property, our ability to use and enjoy our home, our children's safety and education, our water supply, our livestock and our rural way of life.

More broadly, the proposal would fundamentally alter the character of Ohoka and place additional pressure on infrastructure that was not planned to accommodate development of this scale.

We do not consider that these effects can be adequately addressed through mitigation conditions. In particular, flood risk, groundwater impacts, traffic safety, infrastructure capacity, rural character and prolonged construction effects cannot simply be remedied after the development has occurred.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask the panel to decline the application.

.8. Photos



Figure 1. A view directly from our property through to where the neighbouring development would be.



Figure 2. The same view through to where the proposed development would be, looking towards Whites Road.



Figure 3. A view from our property looking towards the north through to where the proposed development would be.

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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.