

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	Catherine		
Last name	Mullins		
Postal address	[REDACTED]		
Home phone / Mobile phone	[REDACTED]	Work phone	same
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			
☒	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.

3. Introduction – Catherine Mullins

I have lived at [REDACTED], Ohoka since 2006. Moving here was the fulfilment of a lifelong goal: to own a lifestyle block where I could keep, care for and ride my horses, and enjoy seeing them from my home. I made significant personal and financial sacrifices over many years to achieve this lifestyle on my 1.9hectare block. Ohoka is especially suited to horse ownership because it has an established equestrian community, nearby arenas, veterinarians, farriers, feed stores and places to ride. The heavy soils also retain moisture, providing reliable pasture when other areas are very dry. The proposed subdivision opposite my property would fundamentally change the rural environment and quiet way of life that I deliberately chose and have invested in for 20 years.

This submission is as an Affected Party to the Application FTA231 (proposed Ohoka subdivision – Carter Group Ltd.) as my property is located directly adjacent to the Application area. There are several concerns I have about the proposed development in Ohoka covered by Application FTA231 and I believe the Application should be declined. My concerns for consideration are outlined below.

4. Flooding

Flooding and drainage are major concerns in this low-lying, heavy-soil environment. The land retains water and existing drainage can already be under pressure during prolonged or heavy rainfall. From my personal experience of living opposite the site for over 20 years, in seasons of very heavy rainfall I have seen water from the land in question, together with water from the roadside drains, flow across Whites Road. I acknowledge that the applicant may consider the proposed stormwater system adequately modelled for the development site itself. However, it is not clear to me that the modelling demonstrates that my property at [REDACTED] will not be adversely affected. My property is directly opposite the site, and I therefore ask whether the modelling has specifically assessed the potential effects on it, including redirected overland flow, increased pressure on roadside drainage, saturated-ground conditions, groundwater levels, and the consequences of the proposed stormwater system exceeding its design capacity or not performing as intended. General conclusions about the development site do not provide me with assurance unless the modelling identifies my property as a specific receiving location and demonstrates that the frequency, depth and duration of flooding there will not increase. A large subdivision would introduce extensive roofs, roads, driveways and other impermeable surfaces, increasing the speed and volume of stormwater runoff. Even a modest increase in the frequency, depth or duration of surface water could damage pasture, fencing and accessways, restrict the safe use of paddocks, and affect the health and welfare of my horses.

This picture taken in August 2024 taken out of my driveway entrance looking over the road onto the development site. Just winter in Ohoka and this one was considered quite dry..



Two photos of water lying around home are included later in this document.

5. Rural Character & Community

Ohoka's rural character is not simply a view; it is the basis of my everyday lifestyle. Open land, low housing density, dark skies, quiet surroundings and space for animals are central to why I live here. My property also supports abundant birdlife. Starlings, sparrows, finches, magpies and ducks regularly live and breed here, and I have also observed herons, pheasants, quail, kingfishers, tūi and bellbirds. Their presence demonstrates that my property and the surrounding rural landscape provide established feeding, shelter and breeding habitat. A housing development of this scale directly opposite my property would replace a rural outlook with houses, roads, lighting, vehicles and continuous residential activity. Construction would bring prolonged noise, dust, vibration and heavy vehicle movements. Once occupied, additional traffic, domestic noise and night lighting would create a permanent change and could disturb the birdlife that currently uses this area. This would reduce privacy and quiet enjoyment, affect the calm environment needed for keeping and riding horses, and diminish the sense of space and connection with the rural landscape that I value. The design and density of this Application appear inconsistent with the established character of the neighbourhood and would materially alter the lifestyle experienced from my home and property.

6. Traffic

A direct effect on the community and all neighbouring properties will be the substantial increase in vehicle traffic resulting from the proposed development. The roading network around the village of Ohoka is a rural network that was not designed for, and is not adequate to accommodate, urban-scale traffic volumes. A development of this size would place significant additional pressure on that network and would ultimately require substantial upgrading. It is unclear who would pay for that work and its ongoing maintenance. Local roads already become busy at peak times, and additional traffic would increase delays and the risk of conflict among cars, cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders, farm vehicles and trucks. Safety along the roadside berms would be negatively affected for people walking, running, cycling, walking dogs and riding horses—all popular activities in Ohoka—and these activities could become dangerous as traffic volumes increase. For me, this would make entering and leaving my property more difficult and could reduce my ability to ride safely in the local area. I am also concerned about construction traffic, road noise and pressure on intersections, stormwater systems and other services. Public transport options are non-existent, so the development is likely to remain heavily car-dependent. Any assessment should consider cumulative demand, not only whether individual components can technically be upgraded, and should identify who will fund the necessary upgrades while demonstrating that existing residents will not experience reduced safety, reliability or levels of service.

7. Insurability Risk

I am concerned that approval of a large subdivision in an area with recognised drainage constraints could affect how insurers and lenders assess surrounding properties. Even if my property does not experience direct flooding, a changed perception of local hazard exposure may affect future premiums, policy terms, excesses, exclusions, availability of cover or lending decisions. Those consequences would fall on existing residents who did not create the additional risk. Loss of affordable or comprehensive insurance would have a serious personal and financial effect on me and could reduce the security and marketability of my home. The Panel should therefore require robust evidence addressing not only engineering compliance within the site, but also the potential effects on hazard perception and insurability of neighbouring properties over the long term.

8. Absence of Net Economic Benefits

Any short-term construction activity or increase in housing supply must be weighed against the full public and private costs of the proposal. These may include road and intersection upgrades, stormwater infrastructure, ongoing maintenance, pressure on services, environmental mitigation and the loss of productive rural land and established rural amenity. Existing residents could bear indirect costs through congestion, reduced safety, increased flood or insurance concerns, and loss of enjoyment and value associated with their properties. The proposal's benefits should not be treated as net benefits unless these costs, risks and who will pay for them are transparently identified. In my view, the material does not justify imposing substantial and lasting effects on the existing community for benefits that may largely accrue to the developer and future landowners.

7. Lastly

I ask the Panel to give significant weight to the living experience of directly affected residents and to the combined effects of the proposal. Traffic, flooding risk, noise, lighting, loss of privacy, ecological disturbance and the removal of rural character should not be considered in isolation, because together they would permanently change my daily life. Mature trees and local wildlife may be lost or disturbed, while limited on-site parking could result in overflow parking and further roadside pressure. I am not opposed to appropriately located and planned housing, but I oppose development of this scale and intensity in this location. I ask that approval be declined.

8. Photos

May 2021. Photo looking across the front lawn at [REDACTED] towards the development site across the road. "Autumn can be wet too"



May 2021. Back yard of my property at [REDACTED], Ohoka.



Thank you for the opportunity to put forward my views on Application FTA231 as a directly affected resident.

Catherine Mullins

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]