

Before an Independent Hearings Panel  
Appointed by Waimakariri District Council

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*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Submissions and further submissions on the Proposed  
Waimakariri District Plan

*and:* Hearing Stream 12D: Ōhoka rezoning request

*and:* **Carter Group Property Limited**  
(Submitter 237)

*and:* **Rolleston Industrial Developments Limited**  
(Submitter 160)

Statement of evidence of Carl Davidson (survey)

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Dated: 13 June 2024

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## STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF CARL DAVIDSON

### INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Carl Phillip Davidson.
- 2 I have worked in the field of research since 1991 (33 years). I hold a Bachelor of Arts in sociology, psychology, and political science with a First Class Honours
- 3 I am a Director and Shareholder of Research First, a Christchurch based research and insights company which has been operating since 2006.
- 4 In addition to my role with Research First, I am a Senior Adjunct Fellow at the University of Canterbury where I teach research methods and supervise research projects for the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme.
- 5 I have previously taught research methods to the graduate level at Massey University.
- 6 I have authored (or co-authored) ten textbooks on research methods in New Zealand. Two of these texts (*Social Science Research in New Zealand*, Auckland University Press, 2018 and *Getting Started: An Introduction to Research Methods*, Pearson Education New Zealand, 2012) have become standard texts for teaching research methods in New Zealand universities and polytechnics.
- 7 Between 2009 and 2011 I was the Chief Families Commissioner. As part of this role, I led the Families Commission's transformation into the Social Policy Evaluation Research Unit (SUPERU).
- 8 I have also served as the Chair of the Canterbury Employment Skills Board (CESB); as a board member of the Christchurch Employers' Chamber of Commerce; as a Committee Member on the Ministry of Social Development's Social Policy Evaluation and Research (SPEAR) initiative; and as an expert on the Crown's Advisory Experts Group for Information Security (AEGIS) for the Children's Action Plan (CAP).
- 9 In 2023 I was made a Fellow of the Research Association of New Zealand (RANZ).
- 10 In 2023 I was also named an Insight250 Winner by ESOMAR (ESOMAR is a global membership association for market research and insights that was founded in 1947). The Insight250 is an annual award celebrating the worldwide pioneers, leaders and innovators in market research, data-driven marketing and insights.

- 11 I am familiar with the submitters' proposed development in Ōhoka (in the Waimakariri District).

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 12 Although this is not an Environment Court hearing, I note that in preparing my evidence I have reviewed the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in Part 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. I have complied with it in preparing my evidence. I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise, except where relying on the opinion or evidence of other witnesses. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

### **RESEARCH CONDUCTED**

- 13 In May 2024 Research First Ltd was commissioned by the submitters in order to:

13.1 Establish demand for, and preferences regarding, properties located in Ōhoka, and

13.2 Provide a useful measure of the demand and desirability of Ōhoka as a location to show how Ōhoka compares to alternative areas in the Greater Christchurch part of the Waimakariri District (such as Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Pegasus, Tuahiwi, Woodend, etc.) and locations further afield in the Waimakariri District (such as Cust, Oxford, Loburn, etc.).

- 14 I understand that the purpose of this research is to inform the assessment of provisions in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) concerned with housing demand, including:

14.1 Whether there is a high demand for housing in Ōhoka, relative to other areas in Waimakariri District;

14.2 The needs/demands for the type, price and location of different houses in the District;

14.3 The influence of distance and access to facilities/services on preferences and choices of housing location.

- 15 I understand that the matters in paragraph 14.1 and 14.2 above have been addressed to date in the evidence of Mr Chris Jones which draws upon his experience in the property sector, and the purpose of this research is to provide more quantitative data on this subject.

- 16 To understand the potential demand and current desirability of Ōhoka as a location, an online survey was conducted with 600 residents from across Greater Christchurch.
- 17 Greater Christchurch is a defined geographical area that includes and surrounds Christchurch City. The larger towns in the Selwyn and Waimakariri districts that fall within Greater Christchurch include Rolleston, Rangiora, Kaiapoi and Lincoln, while smaller settlements include West Melton, Prebbleton, Tai Tapu, Springston, Tuahiwi, Woodend and Pegasus. Lyttelton and its harbour also fall within the defined boundaries for Greater Christchurch<sup>1</sup>.
- 18 The panel online survey method is an industry standard approach to sentiment measurement and involved working with our panel provider, Dynata, the world's largest first-party data platform.<sup>2</sup> Dynata has an extensive library of consumer profile attributes collected directly from individuals through survey data. This means research companies can work with Dynata to access trustworthy data resources that are designed and actively managed to deliver precise audience selection.
- 19 Here that audience selection meant a series of target quotas being applied to provide a representative sample of Greater Christchurch in terms of participants by age and location. Those quotas were:

Location		
Waimakariri	12%	n=72
Christchurch City (incl. Banks Peninsula)	76%	n=456
Selwyn	12%	n=72
Age		
25 - 44	40%	n=240
45 - 64	38%	n=228
65+	22%	n=132

- 20 The target audience focused on participants who were aged 25 and older to capture the viewpoints of those most likely to be considering a home purchase in the short term (i.e. within the next 12 months) as well as those for whom it is more medium or longer-term goal.
- 21 While the use of a panel sample means the achieved sample is not representative in a strictly random sense (because it samples from individuals who have signed up to the Dynata panel, hence introducing the potential of a selection bias), **if** a survey sample of

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.greaterchristchurch.org.nz/assets/Documents/greaterchristchurch/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dynata.com/>

this size (i.e., N=600) were selected randomly it would generate a maximum sampling error ('margin of error') of +/-3.9%.

- 22 Panel-powered online survey such as this have been shown to be more accurate and more reliable than standard online surveys. The panel approach means the participations are pre-screened and (within the target quotas set, see above) provide a more representative sample of participants. The well-known polling organisation YouGov notes that these qualities "*significantly enhance the accuracy and reliability of [the] survey data, providing dependable insights for informed decision-making*"<sup>3</sup>.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

- 23 The results of the research are demonstrated in **Appendix 1**. I note that the survey was only recently completed, and as such, I have been limited by time to properly analyse all of the survey question responses. I have therefore focused on the response to questions which are most relevant to the core purpose of the research (as set out in paragraphs 14 and 15 above).
- 24 The primary research conducted for Carter Group shows:
- 24.1 When asked where survey participants would most like to live in the Waimakariri District, Ōhoka ranked third behind the two major settlements in the District (Rangiora and Kaiapoi). 21% of respondents nominated Ōhoka as their first choice. This shows that unprompted preferences for Ōhoka are ahead of urban areas and settlements such as Pegasus, Woodend, Tuahiwi, Oxford, etc.
- 24.2 When asked to reconsider their preferences but to imagine that "all the areas in the Waimakariri District have all the same facilities available to you (i.e. schooling, supermarkets and transport)" the preference for Ōhoka increased to second overall across the District, moving ahead of Kaiapoi.
- 24.3 For both questions respondents were not prompted to think about Ōhoka but, instead, to consider all the options available within the Waimakariri District.
- 24.4 In both cases (current state and with facilities available) preferences for living in Ōhoka were highest among those participants in the family-raising part of the family lifecycle (i.e., those respondents aged 25-44).
- 24.5 Preferences for Ōhoka were also highest among those respondents that lived in households with household incomes

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<sup>3</sup> <https://business.yougov.com/content/46364-top-five-benefits-online-panels-surveys>

between \$100,000 and \$150,000, and those with household incomes over \$150,000.

- 24.6 When asked why they preferred Ōhoka respondents were most likely to talk about it offering a desirable mix of rural surroundings / country-type living with an easy commute to Christchurch (hence offering an appealing mix of urban lifestyle within a rural setting). In addition, respondents found the peacefulness and perceived safety appealing attributes.

### **CONCLUSION**

- 25 The research conducted by Research First for the Carter Group **clearly shows** that Ōhoka has high demand relative to other areas in Waimakariri District generally and has particular attributes that are sought or valued by respondents.
- 26 This research also supports the conclusion that further residential development in Ōhoka would likely be met with significant demand to support that development.

Dated: 13 June 2024

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Carl Davidson

**APPENDIX 1**

Carter Group

# Residential Location Preferences

Research | June 2024





## Research Context

Carter Group Ltd is seeking the rezoning of land in Ōhoka (in the Waimakariri District) from rural to residential the proposed District Plan review process.

The Carter Group wishes to establish demand for, and preferences regarding, properties located in Ōhoka.

In order to provide a useful measure of the demand and desirability of Ōhoka as a location, it will be necessary to show how Ōhoka compares relative to neighbouring urban areas (such as Kaiapoi, Pegasus, Tuahiwi, etc.) and locations further afield in the Waimakariri District (such as Cust, Oxford, etc.).

# Research Methodology

## Method

To understand the potential demand and current desirability of Ōhoka as a location, an online survey was conducted which captures responses from 600 residents across Greater Christchurch.

Participants were aged 25 years or older to capture the viewpoints of those who are potentially considering a home purchase in the short term (i.e. within the next 12 months) as well as those for whom it is more medium or longer-term goal. This will include aspirational consideration as well as likely purchasers.

## Sample Demographics

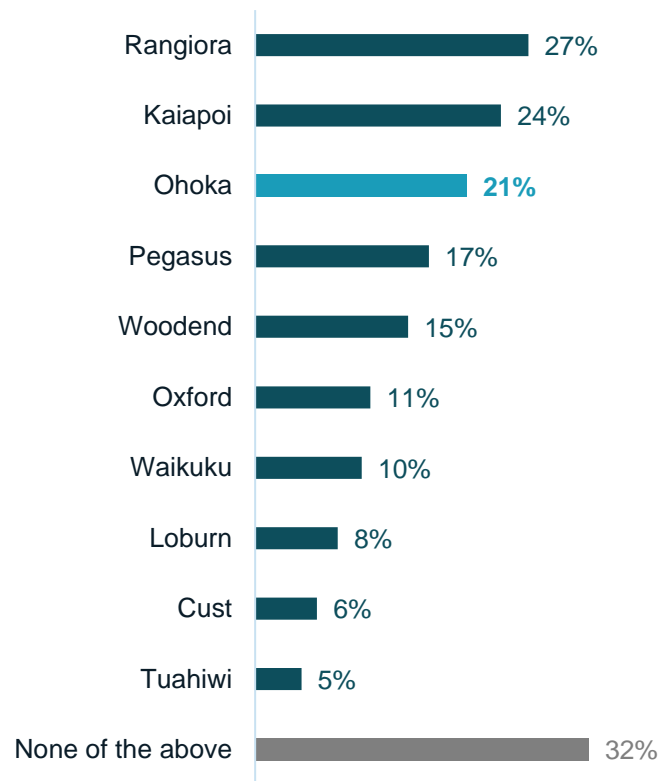
	Quota	Achieved
<b>Location</b>		
Waimakariri	12% n=72	12% n=73
Christchurch City (incl. Banks Peninsula)	76% n=456	76% n=455
Selwyn	12% n=72	12% n=72
<b>Age</b>		
25-44 years	40% n=240	41% n=244
45 – 64 years	38% n=228	37% n=224
65+ years	22% n=132	22% n=132

# AREA PREFERENCE

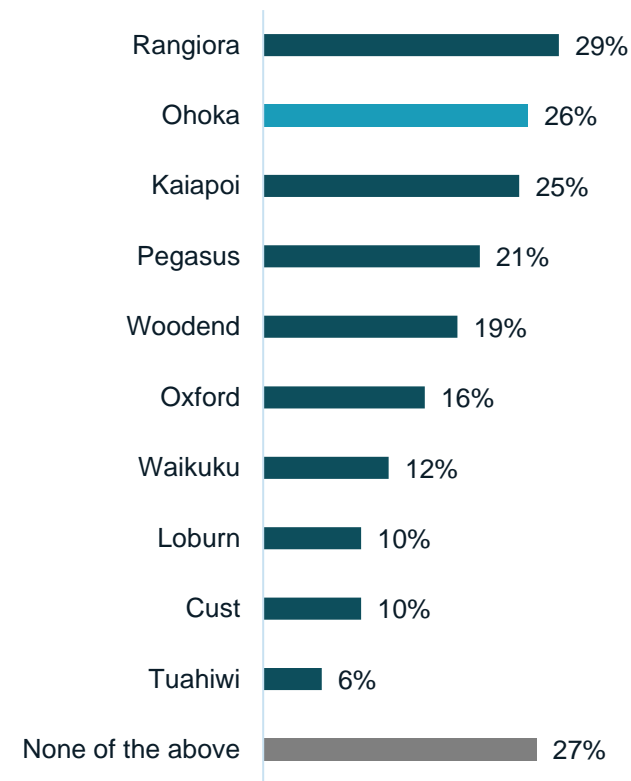
Ōhoka initially ranked third amongst respondents as the area they would most like to live in the Waimakariri District.

When all areas are assumed to have the same facilities available, interest in Ōhoka rose by 5 percent, making it the second area respondents would most like to live in the Waimakariri District.

Q5. Which area would you most like to live in? (Waimakariri District Map shown)



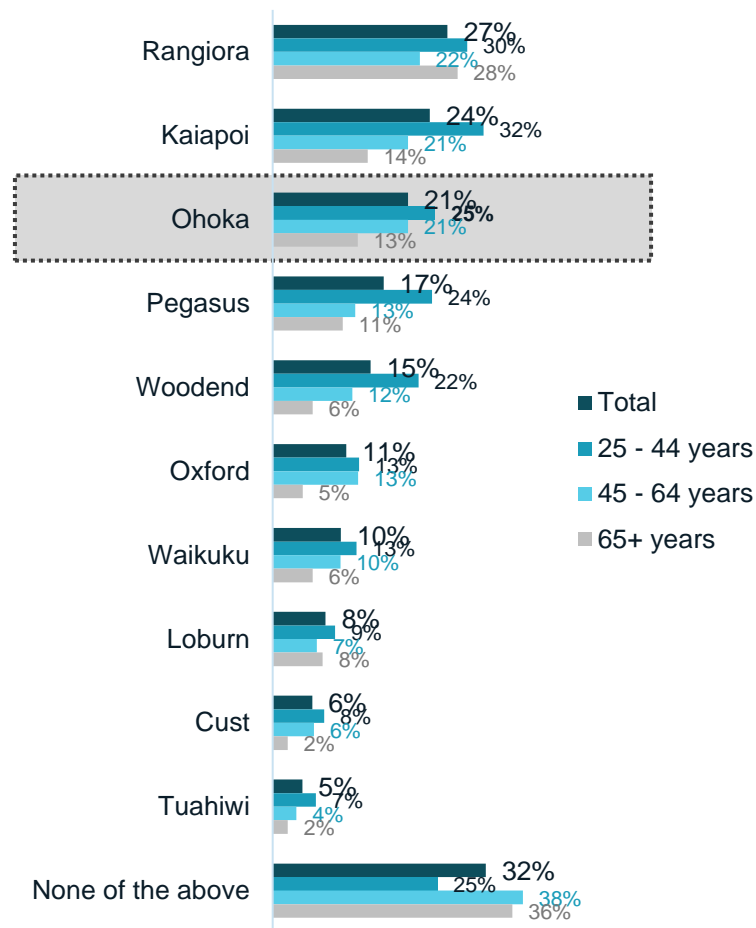
Q6. Now assuming all areas within the Waimakariri District have all the same facilities etc available to you (i.e. schooling, supermarkets and transport), would that change which areas you'd like to live in?



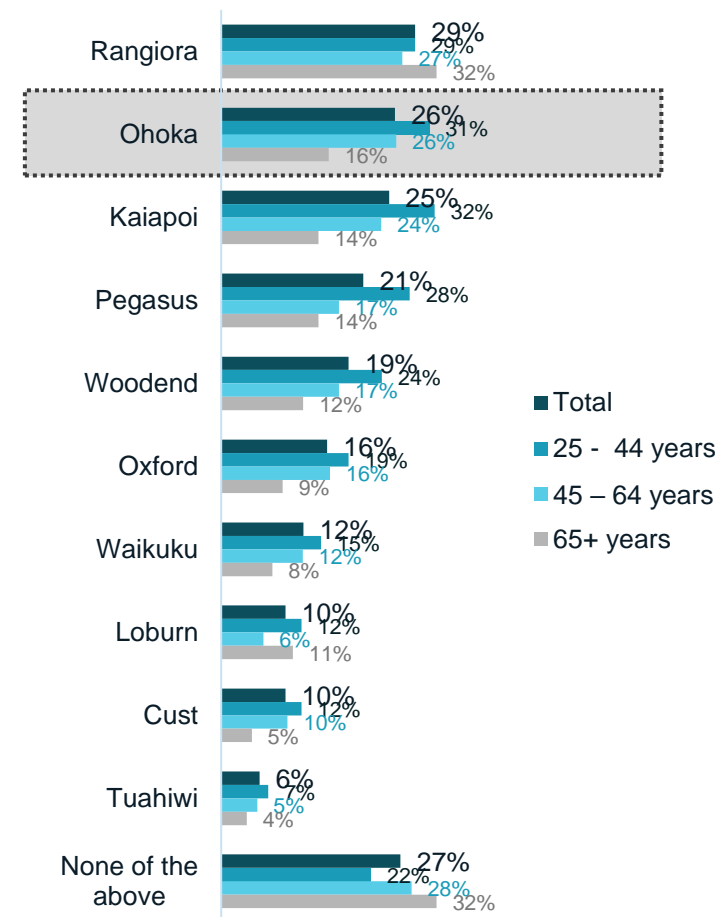
# AREA PREFERENCE

We see preference for Ōhoka lower with age – the strongest preference sits among those aged 25-44 years old.

Q5. Which area would you most like to live in? (Waimakariri District Map shown)



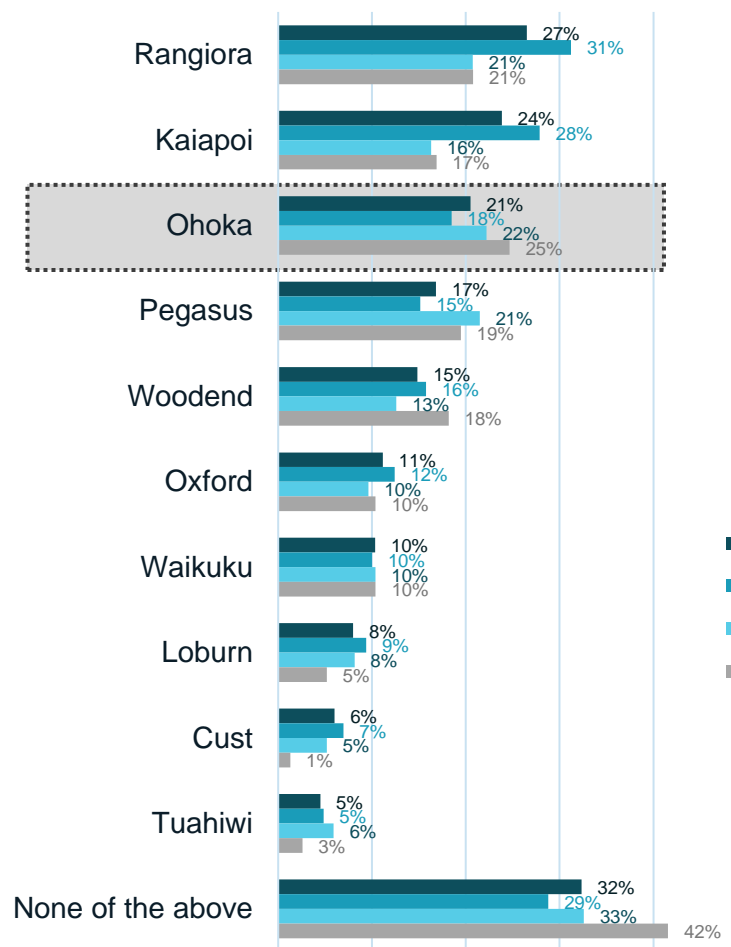
Q6. Now assuming all areas within the Waimakariri District have all the same facilities etc available to you (i.e. schooling, supermarkets and transport), would that change which areas you'd like to live in?



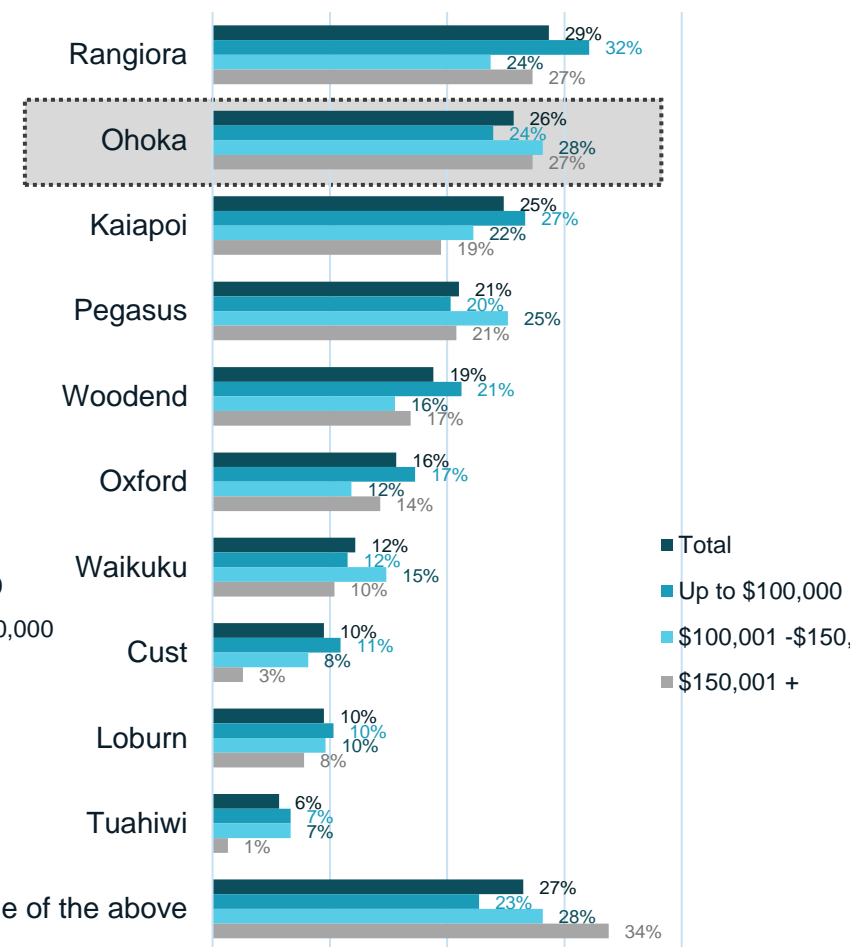
# AREA PREFERENCE

Ōhoka shows stronger appeal among those with a higher household income across both preference questions

Q5. Which area would you most like to live in? (Waimakariri District Map shown)



Q6. Now assuming all areas within the Waimakariri District have all the same facilities etc available to you (i.e. schooling, supermarkets and transport), would that change which areas you'd like to live in?



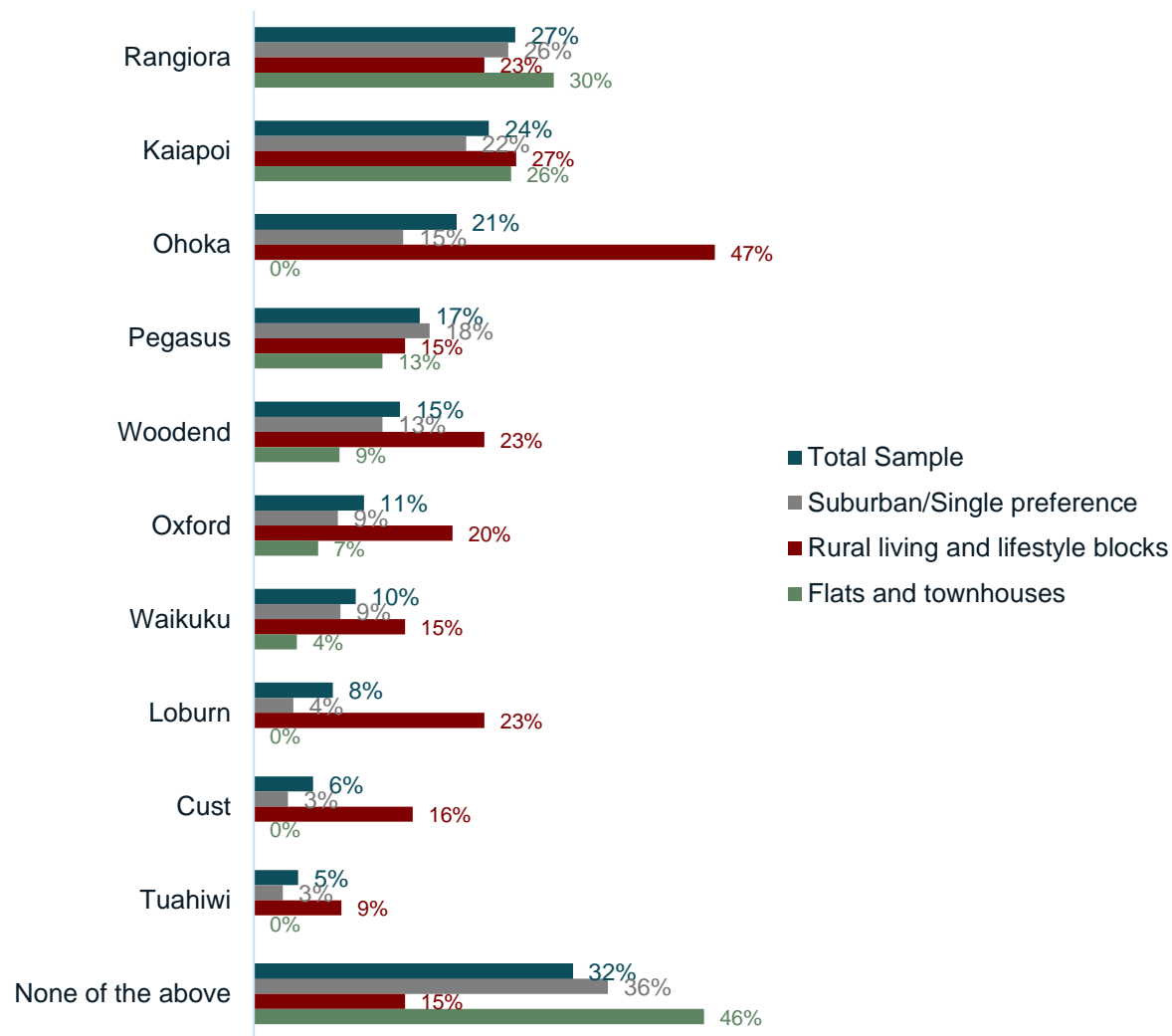
Base size Total n=600, upto \$100,000 n=330, \$100,001-\$150,000 n=135, \$150,001+ n=77

# AREA PREFERENCE – BY HOUSING PREFERENCE

Ōhoka shows strongest preference out of all locations based on those who prefer Rural Living and lifestyle blocks, commanding nearly 50% area preference.

Those who prefer rural living and lifestyle blocks are more likely to be employed full or part time, and have children living at home.

Q5. Which area would you most like to live in?  
(Waimakariri District Map shown) *split by housing appeal*



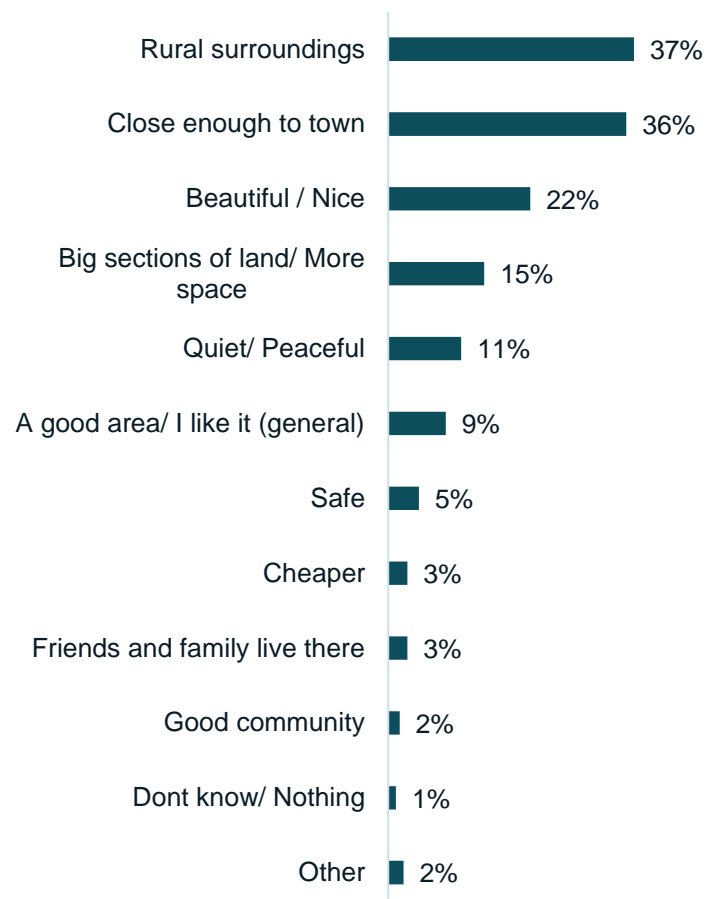
What type of housing option is most appealing to you? Total Sample n=600, Suburban homes/ single detached housing n=376, Rural living n=124, Flats and townhouses n=46. Other results are indicative as base is low.

# WHY OHOKA OPEN ENDED

The balance of rural and closeness to the city centre is the main appealing factor for those who would want to live in Ohoka, with respondents appreciating the rural lifestyle balanced with ease of commute to the city.

Respondents also mention the idyllic nature of the area being another drawcard, along with the size of land suitable for families and the peace and quiet a rural area can bring.

Q8. Why have you selected Ōhoka as an area you would like to live in?



*“Ability to live a **rural lifestyle** that is away from the city limits but still close enough for a **quick drive** into **city** malls and amenities” - Rural*

*“It is a rural area which I like, it **survived the earthquakes better** than some of the other areas especially Kaiapoi.” - Rural*

*“Because it’s **closer to Christchurch** and it’s **rural**.” – Close enough to town*

*“It’s **rural** and has **beautiful surroundings**.” – Beautiful/nice*

*“Perception of **space** and **peaceful** area to **raise a family**.” – Big sections of land/more space*

*“**Larger** land sections within an **affordable price**. Lifestyle properties for garden and animals.” – Big sections of land/more space*

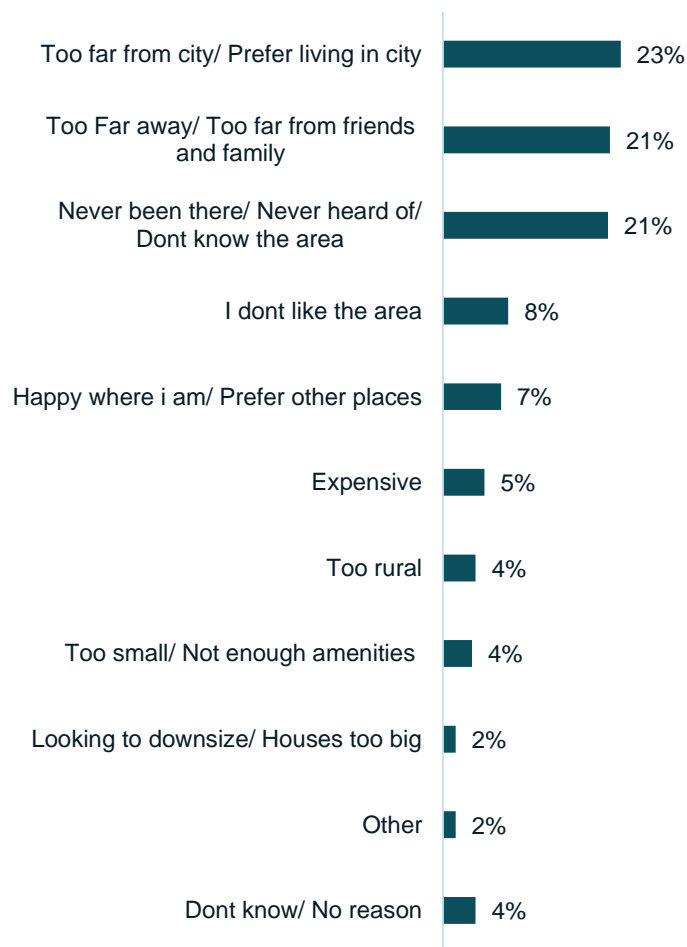
*“Fresh air, **quiet, safe** and **nice people**.” – Quiet/peaceful*

# WHY NOT OHOKA OPEN ENDED

However we see a decent proportion (44%) who claim the distance away from friends, family and the city is the key barrier to living in Ōhoka.

Awareness of Ōhoka as a livable area is also low, with one in five Christchurch respondents not knowing about the area at all

Q7. You didn't select Ōhoka as an area you would like to live in. Why would you not want to live in Ohoka?



*“Too far out from the CBD and places I frequently visit .”  
- Too far from city*

*“As an older individual, I prefer to live in the suburbs of Christchurch, nearer friends and services.” – Too far from city*

*“Too far from shops, etc, would feel isolated” – Too far from friends and family*

*“Too far from my place of work and I really can't be bothered with a daily commute.” – Too far from friends and family*

*“I'm not sure, I just like to live more far out. I don't know much about Ohoka never knew it was there.” – Never been there*

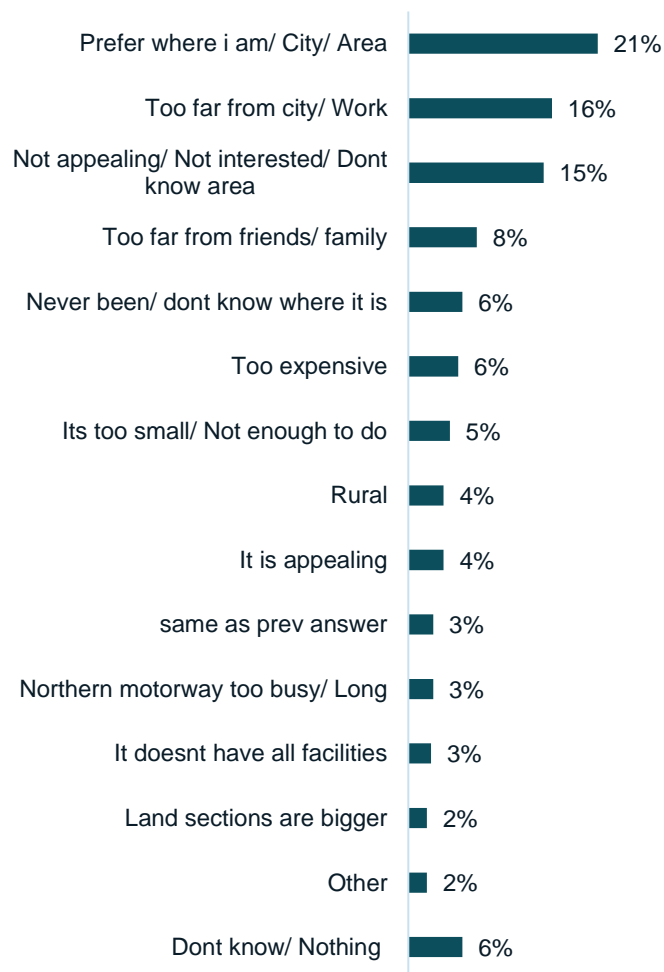
*“I have never even heard about this part of region.” – Never been there*



# WHY NOT ŌHOKA OPEN ENDED

When looking at Ōhoka as a full serviceable area, aside from those preferring to live where they currently are, we still see location and distance to the city as a key barrier, followed closely by lack of knowledge about Ōhoka overall. Other aspects come through but at a low rate.

Q9. Assuming all facilities are there, why isn't Ōhoka an appealing area to live in?



**“Too far away from central city.” – Prefer where I am**

**“Ohaka is further from the coast.” – Prefer where I am**

**“Too far away from everything.” - Too far from city/work**

**“Too far from city motorway.” - Too far from city/work**

**“A bit too country and I don't know much about it.” – Not appealing/Not interested/Don't know area**

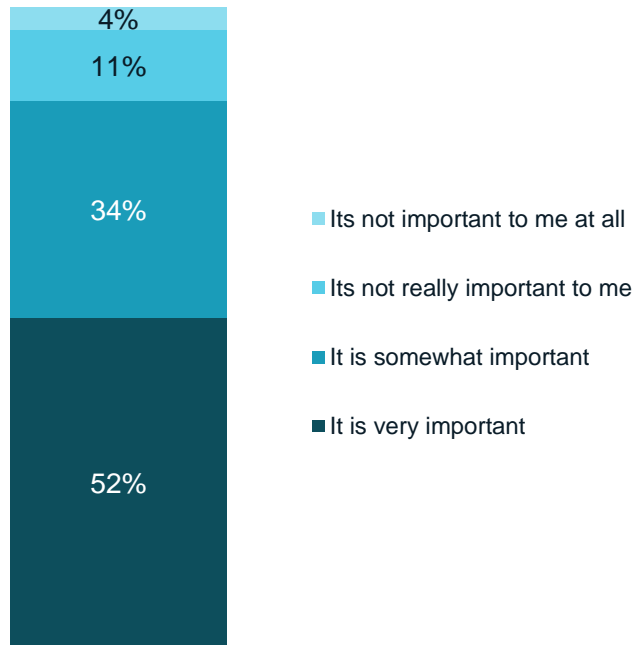
**“Don't know that area well enough to make a decision.” – Not appealing/Not interested/Don't know area**

**“Too far away from my friends and family, not too keen on living all the way out there as it would cost me more to travel into the city.” – Too far from friends/family**

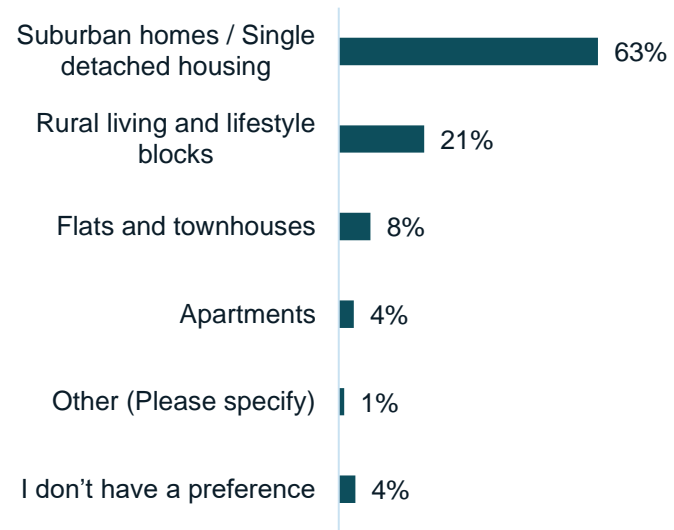
# IMPORTANCE OF DISTANCE AND HOUSING PREFERENCES

- Availability of public transport is very important to over half of Christchurch respondents, with only 15% stating it isn't an issue at all.
- There is great appeal for suburban homes/single detached housing with just under two thirds finding this housing type appealing. Surprisingly, there isn't too much of a difference between demand for an existing home or a new build, both showing interest at around one third of Christchurch residents

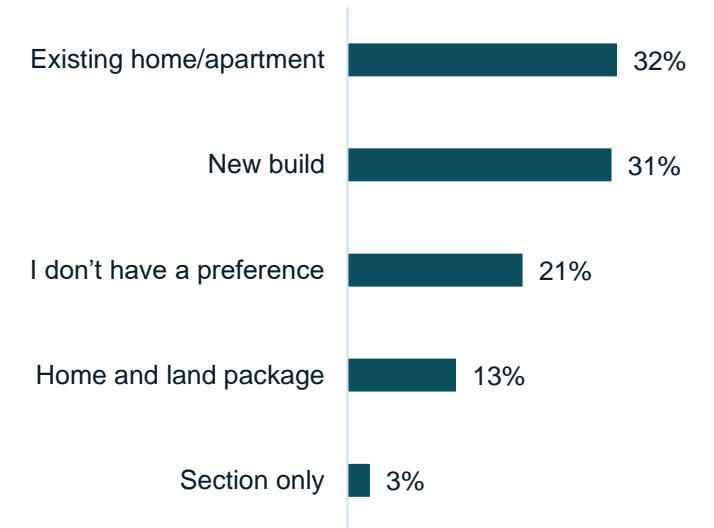
Q12. When thinking about where you would want to live, how much importance is placed on travel distance to main centers and/or availability of public transport?



Q13. What type of housing option is most appealing to you?



Q14. What type of home would you want to buy?





We see an **increase in interest for Ōhoka as a full serviceable area**, with over one quarter of respondents wanting to live there.

This increases to **47%** when looking at those who prefer Rural living/lifestyle blocks.



Having **rural surroundings and vicinity to the city** are the key appealing aspects of those who are open to living in Ōhoka



**Barriers** for living in Ōhoka are around **being too far away from friends & family**, while as a full serviceable area, the distance to the city is still present, however **lack of knowledge is also a notable barrier**



Thank you