

Thank you for hearing us out.

Myself, Russell, and David are speaking on behalf of the Ōhoka Residents Association. We are not NIMBY's we are not anti development, we are not pot stirrers.

On the contrary we encourage and support sensible development that is appropriate and proportional.

We, the public, entrust that the Proposed District Plan and any amendments made to it during this review process is for the benefit of the common good of all rate payers, and not private good for selected individuals or sections of society.

The Ohoka Residents Association say thanks, but no thanks to the submitter, on the basis their proposal does not give effect to the NPS-UD, the Canterbury regional policy statement, District Development Strategy. Ohoka just isn't the right location for a development of this style and scale.

A record 648 submissions were lodged with Council for RCP031 and 96% were opposed.

The unsuitability of this plan change request for Ōhoka prompted the Waimakariri District Council to make a very rare move in making itself a submitter in opposition. In fact, Environment Canterbury, Christchurch City Council, Ministry of Education, Rural drainage advisory Group, Ohoka School, Ohoka oxford community board, Tuahiwi community board, Waka Kotahi, the former Mayor and local MP and National Party Front Bencher, all made submissions opposing the plan change.

So where are all those opposers now? Well, unbeknown to all, this plan change was lodged one month prior as submissions 160 and 237 to the PDP review process. The community had already believed they had made their submission, not fully grasping the two different processes happening at the same time, so it slipped through without much notice.

In fact, many still find it difficult to accept that even though PC31 has already been rigorously examined and tested within a standard RMA process and failed, that RIDL are able to pursue the same outcome via a parallel process.

Ms Appleyard, in her legal submission states that “we have moved on from PC31”, which is patently untrue on the basis that these new reports are near identical, including the ‘Master Plan’ images image and layout.

All these statements of evidence, are still based off the same technical reports from PC31 though have been systematically edited to convince the reader that the rural village they all spoke of in PC31 no longer exists, it is now an urban area.

The PC31 and the rezoning proposal are essentially the same albeit, somewhat ambiguous as to the intended final state. Accordingly the minimum yield would be 754 lots, maximum yield 1057 lots.

Submitters from PC31 spoke of the rural environment, established trees, the peaceful and relaxed lifestyle, appreciation and love for the existing amenities, horse riding down quiet streets, self-sufficient lifestyle choices, large gardens and animals, the small local school. We hope that on your site visit around the area these descriptions also reflect what you saw. Ohoka is not urban and in making it so removes all the features that made it unique and special in the first place.

But of course few people talk about Ohoka without mentioning the high water table, springs, ground water resurgence, flooding and the down stream effects getting worse and worse each rain event, But this is how Ohoka has always been, in the old days referred to as a bog.

Had you heard first hand from our community, they would have shown you photos of the flooding, so I have brought them along today, as it helps to show that we are not talking about minor ponding in our driveways, but rather, water levels that are cutting off access and creeping above FFL’s in the older houses downstream of the proposal site.

Key to our concerns are that the proposal focuses on providing remediation within the boundary of the site—it does not give assurances that there will be no detrimental effects or costs incurred by the adjacent and downstream dwellings. Furthermore, all infrastructure solutions remain theoretical, the actual details being left until subdivision stage, which we consider to an unacceptable risk.

And while we acknowledge the benefits of riparian planting along the waterways, this is not enough to compensate for the extreme modifications required to the site to make it suitable for urbanisation. The Master Plan for the development has already incorporated alterations and diversions of the Ohoka tributary and other waterways. But these activities are still all subject to national environmental standards for freshwater. We note that 4ha subdivision would also bring about esplanade provisions along the Ohoka stream.

We all know that 754-1057 additional houses on the site will overwhelm Ohoka and it will no longer be the unique semi-rural village that people cherish it for. The addition of this many new dwellings will destroy the very character that these would-be home-owners are attracted to in the first place.

Some of our issues may seem minor, but we hear so often from developers that their experts with their desk top modelling say a viable solution can be found and that details can be worked out at a later stage. Meanwhile our lived experiences are just ignored. As Einstein once said “ in theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice, they are not”.

But this all ignores the fact that the land is, and always has been unsuitable for this extent of development. The scale of the stormwater remediation solution gives some insight as to the extent of the problem.

This excessive infrastructure later becomes the responsibility of the council and we, the rate payers, are left to pick up the tab for any and all subsequent problems. For example, Council have spent around \$20M trying to resolve undercurrent and stormwater issues in Mandeville that developers said wouldn't happen. Further down Mill road (Kintyre lane) despite the developer being told that it would not work, a stormwater basin was dug, and now Council have been unable to get a resource consent because it intercepts ground water. Rate payers, once again will be left to pick up the bill.

Historically, Ōhoka has met its housing demand in a way that is sympathetic to the surroundings. The SETZ zone has accommodated three new dwellings in the last 8 years, which may not sound like much, but it is a 9% increase. The Large lot residential dwellings have increased over 63% since 2012. Despite the submitter's expert claiming that there has been no new rural lifestyle land available in Ohoka, you only need to look on the eplan to see two ODP's or visit Hallfield. Sites are still available.

Now that the applicant seeks a settlement zone, rather than general residential. ORA question whether the PDP in fact supports new greenfield subdivision developments as a settlement zone, and if so surely not one of this scale? The PDP has an obligation to ensure that “existing settlements are recognised and retain their existing character, while providing for a mixture of commercial and residential use on larger sites”.

Ohoka is such a unique feature of the Waimakariri district. The commercial activities in our SETZ zone still reflect and provide for our semi-rural nature. Irrigation, Petrol, mechanical repairs, simple grocery needs. Admittedly you wont easily find a decaf-soy -late, but as lock down showed, the existing facilities were more than capable of providing for our basic day-to-day needs. We love that the Ohoka domain is the heart of the village, and not a shopping center.

We predict that the most likely scenario for the proposal is the SETZ, no school, no polo and a retirement facility resulting in a yield of 1057 residential dwellings. The new development will increase the number of residential dwellings in Ohoka from anywhere between 463% through to a massive 689%.

The proposal therefore is not an extension of the Ohoka Settlement, rather, it is a med/low density, independent, urban suburb straddling the gap between Ohoka and Mandeville.

We can see from activities in Selwyn the applicants modus operandi is to acquire ‘cheap’ agricultural land located within the Greater Christchurch boundary, and anywhere outside of the planned Future Development Areas. They then go about changing the status of the zoning, to substantially increase the value of the land. – with little to no regard for supporting well-functioning urban environments.

We have concern also that the district plan review process is being used to unjustly create adverse impacts on land markets, particularly as CIAL have opposed other rezoning requests in Ohoka but notably, not the submitters proposal. We note that Jo Appleyard acts on behalf of both CIAL and RIDL/Carter Group.

Regardless of what’s happening in the background in Ohoka or Kaiapoi, we believe that the premise for their rezoning request is baseless for the following 2 main reasons:

Firstly: Ohoka is not predominantly urban- it hasn't changed over the last 11 months, and the Independent Hearings Panel from RCP031 have already concluded that "Ohoka township is not in and of itself, nor is intended to be (for purposes of WDUE and GCUE)...predominately urban" (RCP031 IHPDR, p27).

Secondly: Ohoka's appeal is due to its rural lifestyle living. Other existing areas are better suited to urban living including Rangiora, Kaipapoi, Woodend, Pegasus . Ironically, evidence for this has come from the submitter's own market research survey. Key findings from this survey include:

- 428/600 (71.3%) of sampled people did not chose Ohoka as a place to live in at all.
- Reasons given included: " Too far from the city, friends, family, can't be bothered with the daily commute. Just too far away from everything,".
- 1 in 5 of the respondents from Christchurch hadn't even heard of Ohoka.
- based on those who prefer Rural Living and lifestyle blocks Ohoka was the preferred choice

However the surrounding areas of Mandeville, Swannanoa, Clarkville and Fernside were not options for selection in the survey, which raises concern as to the statistical validity of the survey

- The submitters realestate expert also says that he could easily sell 4ha blocks in Ohoka from a demand perspective – which is not what this proposal is seeking to develop

Overall the survey results actually support ORA's position that Ohoka is not urban, and that demand in this area is driven from rural lifestyle blocks

ORA does not accept that all of the other underlying issues from PC31 have been resolved.

Further,

- Ohoka is inherently disconnected from other main towns from between approx. 10km and 30km.

- There is no well serviced public transport, and the free bus to Kaiapoi will do little to reduce the overall travel kilometres.
- Therefore, expansion of Ohoka, particularly to this degree, will not support a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The applicants zone change proposal is contrary to all those all those higher order planning policies, that steer us towards well functioning urban environments.

We are never going to get affordable housing, reduce the cost of living, replace our aging infrastructure, develop communities resilient to climate change by building exclusive, car dependent suburbs, disconnected from main towns. The Strategic direction is there, developers just need to follow it!