

**IN THE MATTER OF
AND
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Resource Management Act 1991

An application by Rolleston
Industrial Developments
Limited for a private plan
change RCP031 to the
Waimakariri District Plan
pursuant to Part 2 of Schedule
1 of the Resource
Management Act 1991

Submission of David and Marilyn Ayers

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8 August 2023

Submission of David and Marilyn Ayers

Background

We have lived in what is now the Waimakariri District since 1976 and while we have lived in Rangiora all that time, we know Ohoka and the wider district well.

David Ayers is a former Mayor of Waimakariri, spending 30 years as an elected local government member, having started as a Rangiora Borough Councillor in 1983. In 1986, the Borough and the surrounding Rangiora District amalgamated to form an enlarged Rangiora District. In 1987, Eyre County Council, which included Ohoka in its area, went into joint administration with Rangiora District Council, becoming fully amalgamated early in 1989. In October 1989, the nation-wide reorganisation of local government saw the creation of the Waimakariri District. David Ayers was a councillor through all those changes up until 2001, spending the period between 1995 and 2001 as Waimakariri Deputy Mayor. After standing down in 2001, he was re-elected to the council in 2007 and then was elected Mayor in 2010, a post he retained for nine years until his retirement in 2019.

From 2007 to 2019, David was a member of what is eventually named the Greater Christchurch Partnership Committee, and from 2009 to 2019 a member of the Canterbury Regional Transport Committee. Between 1986 and 1989 he was a member of the Canterbury United Council which operated as the regional planning authority for the area between the Rakaia and (approximately) Conway Rivers.

Our Submission

The District Plan

- The Draft District Plan, as does the Operative Plan, zones the area in question Rural – in the Draft, Rural Lifestyle. This allows for a 4ha subdivision standard.
- District plans are the outcome of a public process and are intended to give effect to how communities see their futures. Obviously, there is also provision for resource consents that result in variations from the plans, but our submission is that inserting a large Residential 2 subdivision into a largely rural area goes beyond the intentions of legislation.
- The Waimakariri District Council, with its community, has always endeavoured to maintain a rural outlook and “feel” in areas like this. Even the existing Ohoka village with its mixture of Residential 3 and 4 properties exudes an air of something less than urban.
- A subdivision that envisages in excess of 2000 people is a step too far.

Growth in the Ohoka area

- The village itself is zoned Residential 3. While the subdivision standard is the same as in Residential 2 areas in the towns, the lower level of amenity, e.g. the lack of kerb and channelling, and the small scale, essentially only Mill Road, gives it a rural village feel.
- The addition of Residential 4 subdivisions with Keetly Place and Wilson Drive, and the developing Residential 4 areas in Bradleys Road north and Mill Road, have not done much to change that. Three of them are essentially hidden from the village and passing traffic anyway. One of the aims of the Council with Rural Residential development, has been to “soak up” the demand for rural living by allowing for smaller blocks of under 4ha and accordingly the fringes of Ohoka were amongst areas identified in the Council’s Rural Residential Strategy in 2019.
- The rest of the development in the immediate Ohoka area has been largely of small blocks of 4ha plus. As with elsewhere in the District, this has been controversial and for this reason, the Council is allowing for a much larger subdivision standard in the west of the District in the Draft Proposed Plan. A step to a much smaller residential standard as proposed in this private plan change is a step in the wrong direction.
- To the south of Ohoka is the major Residential 4 settlement of Mandeville (North). Along with the adjacent “Olive Grove” developments, this has proved problematic. The settlement has tended to sprawl across the plains and because of this, the Council several years ago, “ring-fenced” Mandeville and the olive groves to prevent further expansion. This was challenged unsuccessfully in the Environment Court by an adjacent property owner. This proposed development looks like an attack from the other direction.
- What we have now is an Ohoka Village acting as a local centre for both a rural area and a small township, with the reserve, playground, halls, garage and school. This small rural village will, in effect, be swamped by the size and nature of the proposed development, which will look nothing like what is already in place or planned.

Development Capacity

- Waimakariri, since before we moved to the District in the 1970s, has usually been one of the fastest growing districts in New Zealand. The building of the Christchurch Northern Motorway in the late 1960s has often been credited with being the catalyst for that growth.
- Most of that growth has occurred in the area more-or-less east of the Two Chain Road, which includes the area under review here. Within that area, the growth has mainly occurred within and on the fringes of the urban areas of Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Woodend and Pegasus, particularly the first two.

- Rangiora and Kaiapoi are not suburbs of Christchurch. They are long-established towns in their own rights, with Kaiapoi being as old as Christchurch, and Rangiora almost as early in its establishment. Woodend was also established in the 1850s but has always been smaller than the other two. Pegasus, of course, is much more recent, but is adjacent to Woodend and has site constraints that will make it difficult to expand beyond its current boundaries.
- It makes much more sense for the urban growth of Waimakariri to be concentrated in the Key Activity Areas for the reasons that follow. While the applicants can say that there is a shortage of land for growth, this is open to dispute, particularly in Rangiora and northern Woodend. There is, of course, a distinction between land that is available for future growth and land that is available for particular development companies to purchase.
- Kaiapoi and Rangiora have been accused of being “exurbs” and commuter towns. To an extent has always been true, but they are also significant places of employment. Work done in the mid-2010s showed that Rangiora had three times as much employment as Rolleston and Kaiapoi twice as much. While most of those workers live within the towns, there have always some who have come in from the likes of Woodend/Pegasus (which is close), the rural settlements and areas, and Christchurch.
- From the point of view of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy, this proposed development doesn’t make much sense. It is isolated from other urban areas, can in no way be construed as “rural” or “rural lifestyle” and does not reflect the lower level of amenity found in such other smaller townships of Ohoka, Cust, Tuahiwi, Ashley, Sefton Waikuku Beach, Woodend Beach and Pines-Kairaki.

Non-commuting Movement

- The two towns, particularly Rangiora, have a full range of retail outlets. They generate traffic, including from the Ohoka area. There is sometimes an assumption that people use their cars only for going to and from work. In fact, they travel for a multiplicity of reasons.
- Both Rangiora and Kaiapoi, as long-established towns, have the full range of social infrastructure of clubs and societies, churches and so on. To an extent, the Ohoka/Mandeville/Swannanoa areas has these too, but the range is much smaller, commensurate with the much smaller population. The irony is that the proposed development while making a definite visual impact, would be too small to increase the range of social infrastructure in the area. People will be travelling outside the immediate area to join these groups, as they do now – but in significantly greater numbers.

Transport and Traffic

- We cannot imagine that anyone buying a house in this subdivision would do so with the intention of catching the bus to anywhere.
- It appears that has been calculated that the subdivision would generate about 7400 vehicle movements per day. Because of the location and nature of the subdivision, much of that traffic is likely to use Tram Road, already a problem with regard to safety, both because of vehicle number and because of a series of intersections that have poor crash records.
- There has to be a concern that increasing homewards traffic on the Tram Road off-ramp on the Northern Motorway could cause queueing on the motorway itself.
- Clearly, increased traffic on Mill Road will lead to the loss of amenity values for its residents.
- With regard to traffic generation towards Rangiora, Southbrook Road already carries 26,000vpd – enough said. The most direct route into central Kaiapoi is through the Silverstream subdivision on roads that are designed mainly for internal traffic.
- Traffic generated by this proposed subdivision runs counter to the intentions of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy. Growth needs to occur adjacent to the Key Activity Centres where there can be appropriate and effective investment into roading and public transport infrastructure that is accessible to the greatest number of people.

Conclusion

This proposed development is the wrong sort of subdivision in this place. It's impacts on the surrounding area are negative and it meets no defined need. It offers no advantages over planned and provided-for development around or within Waimakariri's existing urban centres in Rangiora, Kaiapoi and Woodend/Pegasus.

Nothing in the way of engineering solutions will change this.

We submit that the application should be declined.