

Birgit and Matthew Kuriger
8a Tui Grove, Oakura (152)

I am reading this submission on behalf of Birgit and Matthew Kuriger.

We oppose the proposal to rezone 58 hectares of rural land to mainly residential. Our property is one of many along Wairau Stream that overlook the farm, and in particular we are directly opposite the proposed residential area of medium density housing. Based on the current proposal, we will suffer significant loss of rural outlook and privacy which we currently enjoy and was one of the reasons we purchased this property 6 years ago. We believe that a development of this magnitude will fundamentally change the character of Oakura. What makes Oakura unique, is its semi-rural landscape, closeness of the beach, green space and the National Park.

The effect of the loss of rural outlook is amplified by the planned area of medium density housing alongside Wairau Stream. Amending the rules allowing the minimum lot size from 700m² to 300m² would change the rural outlook, and dramatically alter the current view of the Kaitake Ranges, which if this proposal goes ahead, will be obstructed by buildings. Sections of this size are not in keeping with a rural environment or with the rest of the sections within the vicinity of the proposed development. There appears to be no strong reason to allow medium density housing in this area. Furthermore, an increase to the area of the site that can be covered by a building to 55% from 35% and 50% under the current rules, will destroy the open landscape and rural appearance and will no longer protect the views of the Kaitake Ranges. A view that the people of Oakura love.

The plan change contradicts previous information provided during the development of the Paddocks. It is noted in Cameron Twigley's report at paragraph 45, that the applicant, when discussing his vision for the Paddocks subdivision and the importance of protecting Lot 29 from development, stated that residential housing along the main highway into Oakura will "destroy the character of the village" and "ribbon development along a main highway is considered undesirable for safety and aesthetic reasons". The current proposal can only be described as a complete turnabout face from the applicant's original submissions with regards to the Paddocks.

We support the evidence provided by Boffa Miskell at paragraph 3.47 which suggests an open space corridor along the edge of Wairau Stream to protect the stream. They also note on page 41 paragraph 13.67 that the current location of the medium density zoning, positioned on rising land, has the potential for significant adverse landscape and visual effects and they do not support the medium density area (paragraph 15(b)).

Mr Bain submits that the landscape structure can be dealt with as part of the subsequent subdivision applications. We disagree with this. As stated at paragraph 3.67 of the above report, a higher level of certainty of outcomes is required to ensure planting and landscaping is implemented as part of this development. Landscape planting measures to the gullies and waterways should be carried out prior to any development. There is currently only minimal provision for riparian planting along Wairau Stream. It is noted that currently no planting has been carried out following the Paddocks development. Given the proximity to existing houses

and the stream significant planting should be mandatory. We are concerned about the lack of green space and communal areas for a development of this magnitude. The lack of green space and communal areas will affect the usage and availability of local amenities such as the playground, Oakura River, the beach and Matakai Park. The proposal allows for a significant increase in population without providing any firm commitment to equivalent improvements in services or amenities.

The fringes of Oakura need to reflect the existing environment. There is very little in the proposal with regards to landscaping in streets and reserves to enhance the quality of the environment and reduce the visual impact of the development.

The kindergarten, preschool, school, playcentre and library are significant assets to Oakura, well used and much loved. These facilities are already at maximum capacity. If the school roll exceeded available classroom capacity, it would be a huge loss for the community should years 7 and 8 be removed and forced into New Plymouth intermediate schools. Another concern is that existing playing field space could be used for classroom development. The school fields are used for multiple sports and many other activities. Apart from Corbett Park these are the only sports fields in Oakura. Losing part of these fields would have a significant effect on the entire community.

We are very concerned that the additional traffic generated by the proposed plan change will reduce road safety for children travelling to school. Adding another 200 students to Donnelly Street at school drop-off and pick up times will cause additional traffic congestion. There is no consideration for mitigation of the effects that the additional population will have on traffic flow through the village, parking and traffic safety near the school, at the shops and at the beach.

We are opposed to the entrance to the development off Wairau Road. This road is narrow and unsuitable for an increase in traffic to an estimated 4500 cars per day. Despite housing on both sides of Wairau Road there is no footpath, guttering or adequate parking on the east side of the road. Furthermore, the east side of the road is breaking up and falling away on the lower, busiest section of the road near SH45.

There is inadequate safe crossing at the intersection of Wairau and South Road. The nearest pedestrian crossing is near Donnelly Street. We do not believe an underpass is a viable option and safety issues at night should be considered. This is already a dangerous intersection and while a roundabout may assist with traffic flow and speed, there is absence of information as to when construction of a new roundabout and pedestrian underpass will be required. It would appear from the documentation that all the current measures provided for safe passage and transport relate to Wairau and South Road but very little with regards to footpath and urban design treatments such as lighting, pedestrian refuge, cycle and shared pathway to improve upper Wairau Road.

We are not opposed to change or in fact development per se but we believe any development needs to preserve the natural environment of Oakura while ensuring appropriate public roading, safe pedestrian and cycle movement, landscaping and further services and amenities which reflects the character of the area.