

Kate Evans

Verbal Submission

My husband and I came to live in Oakura from the Uk 20 years ago.

What attracted us was the sense of community in this small village. We wanted to live a simpler life and of course were very attracted to the natural beauty of this area.

We had left a very busy part of the uk and loved the quieter pace of life with less traffic and happy positive people.

In addition, we knew that we were ready to start a family and the idea of bringing up children in this close nit community with a wonderful school and the kids being able to walk bare foot to school seemed amazing to us.

Over our time here the village life has been amazing. We now have three children, amazing kiwis who have had the joy of growing up in a safe community where we all look out for each other. They say it takes a village to raise a family and I believe this to be true.

In addition, my children have had the amazing experience of going to Oakura school. My youngest is in year 7. I don't know if we all really realise just what a blessing this school is. The low numbers, the open fields, the sense of community amongst the kids, wonderful teachers and the amazing leadership from Lyn Hepworth.

My opposition to this immense subdivision starts with this. In the time my children have been going to this school it has grown from 200 children to over three hundred. The nature of this change has impacted to a small degree the open space the children have had to run around. The loss of one field already. My kids really felt that when it happened. And longed for that space. Kids need open free space to run and play. Its not just a want it's a need! And its why we came here

We are not against development. In the 10 year district plan there was already substantial development of the land seaside of the main road with 200 houses planned. This was already going to impact the school hugely.

But to add to this a subdivision of this size, with a potential for 400 houses will impact the school catastrophically. The two sets of development would create 600 new houses. A conservative calculation may put children in half of those houses with the average family having 2 children. This means potentially 600 more children at our school.

Now I know that the ministry of education says that this school can accommodate 1000 pupils, but this is at the cost of those wonderful green fields. This is where they will put the class room. This means the kids will have no green space to run around in and will drastically change the nature of the school. I am so so sad about that. These kids are our future.

In addition to this – we actually live at the end of Donnelly Street, the cul de sac where the school is. Aside to the children and the change in our wonderful school, the impact directly on our personal

lives with this many more cars will be great, and I believe will affect the value of our house. People will not want to buy in an area where they are having to fend their way through such a lot of activity on a daily basis. Its bad enough at school times to get around the cars. The school have had to educate parents to drop their kids by the local shop and walk as there is already not enough room for the cars.

I would also like to question why we need this subdivision. Its not like there is a housing shortage in our area. There are houses sitting on the market not being sold. There is a house on Wairau Road that has been for sale for over a year. I do not believe there is a demand.

This subdivision is only about one thing, it is to line the pocket of a group of greedy developers who have already benefited from turning the beautiful view of green fields at the foot of the Kaitakes to an ugly subdivision called The Paddocks. It has lost its rural appeal and now just looks residential.

This proposal seems even worse with small sections and house's crammed in. It will be a blot on the landscape and its so sad to see that happen, for once it is done it cant be reversed.

If this subdivision goes through and we as a community have to bear the brunt of extra traffic, an overcrowded school with no green space, extra waste in our water ways, extra rubbish, extra people filling up our beaches, and a ruined view of the Kaitakes, I will be forever angry that the only people set to gain are the developers – we as a community gain nothing from this and I hope this hearing will see this as important – the question is why do we need it – we don't!