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Rene Lepionka - 50 TU, GROVE, OAKURA

Kia Ora my name is Rene and I am a builder by trade. I moved from Kapiti Coast to settle in Taranaki and the beautiful Oakura Village. The pristine mountain, ranges and coastal environment brought me here with my love of outdoor activities. As a builder I have been involved with building some of the new houses in Oakura and in particular at the Paddocks subdivision. I have seen a steady growth rate of new properties in Oakura and surrounds over the years and feel that there has been a natural growth rate which is healthy for the town. This private plan change has left me stunned – that one mans ambition can put so many people's way of life and well-being at risk. Being a builder, you would think that a new subdivision such as this would be an exciting proposition with the potential of lots of work ahead. However, my love for this community and the natural environment surrounding us has to be thought of first.

A real concern and threat to my family's safety as we live on Upper Wairau Road is the volume of traffic this subdivision will add to Oakura township. The figures shown in the traffic impact assessment prepared by AMTANZ Ltd estimate that when the subdivision is complete it will be generating up to 4150 vehicle movements a day on upper Wairau Road. There is currently 978 vehicles a day but the potential for future growth rates with the main car park for the new mountain bike track projected to see an extra 30,000 vehicles each year (~~....a figure most likely to increase as the growth rate of mountain biking is currently under an explosion with figures for the mountain bike club membership now over 1000~~). While building is going on in the proposed subdivision there will heavy construction vehicles travelling on Wairau adding to these numbers and my concerns for safety.

After doing some calculations of my own looking at the numbers above; if I crunch these down and over a time of 10 hours, say between 8am and 6pm, there would be a vehicle on Upper Wairau approaching the Wairau Road main highway intersection every 6.79 seconds. If I take 500 cars away from this calculation to allow for other hours in the day it brings it up to every 7.5 seconds for a vehicle approaching this intersection. You could expect a car between every 5 – 10 seconds throughout the day at any given time.

This to me also brings major concern if a roundabout was to be put in place as this would definitely stop the flow of the main highway and safety to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. And remember to add some existing horse riders into this equation and added ones coming from the 'equestrian lifestyle blocks' proposed. It's a recipe for disaster.

The numbers on the highway are between 4 – 6,000 and that is a highway designed for fast car movement and in comparison, Wairau is not a highway it is a 50k zone.... A residential road expected to take a similar amount of vehicle movements.

As a builder I know of other sites in Taranaki more suited to development with good access to amenities and less car dependence, which have been refused because they don't have the backing to invest. There is also the famous example of the Fitzroy golf club – an area far more suitable for development rejected on public outcry. Meanwhile a proposition such as this can be put forward and even get to hearing, when so many in the small community will be adversely affected. Just because something can be made to look good on paper does not make it a solid idea. Hard to also forget the promises which were made in the past by the same developer.

There are so many other concerns I and many others have with this subdivision including introduction of pests into the National Park, Storm water and increased heavy rain events, the beach, parking within Oakura Township, water and fire safety, and of course the future of Oakura School to name a few. The 'expert evidence' put forward by the Wairau Estate bombards us, but in no way takes account of community wellbeing, our lifestyles and the liveability of the Oakura Community. This subdivision would mean that our family would go from living on the outskirts of a small quiet town to living in the middle of a suburban subdivision with a dangerous road, unavoidable congestion and noise issues.

Wairau Estate Subdivision in any form, big or small is unwarranted, unnecessary and unethical and I ask that Private Plan Change be completely declined.