
POST ENGAGEMENT PREFERRED OPTION UPDATE REPORT TO DISTRICT PLAN COMMITTEE

DATE: 21 November 2018

TOPIC NAME: Rural

SCOPE DESCRIPTION: RU204: Airfields, Airstrips, and Helipads & RU204WM: West Melton Airfield

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<i>Summary of Preferred Option Endorsed by DPC for Further Engagement:</i>	<p>That airfields, airstrips and helicopter landing pads are managed by amended definitions, policies and rules within the Proposed District Plan to enable better management of such facilities as set out in Option Two of the preferred option report.</p> <p>An alternation to the preferred option endorsed that the West Melton Airfield should be removed from the above, and separate provisions for that site should be further progressed.</p>
<i>Summary of Feedback Received:</i>	<p>Partners, stakeholders, landowners, and the public were generally supportive of the preferred approach.</p>
<i>Recommended Option Post Engagement:</i>	<p>That the Preferred Option previously endorsed by DPC progresses to the 'Drafting and Section 32 Evaluation Phase', including the provision of height restrictions at the Springfield Aerodrome.</p>
<i>DPC Decision:</i>	<p><i>"That the Committee notes the report."</i></p> <p><i>"That the Preferred Option previously endorsed by DPC progresses to the 'Drafting and Section 32 Evaluation Phase', including the provision of height restrictions at the Springfield Aerodrome."</i></p> <p><i>"That the Committee notes the updated summary plans."</i></p>



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview of Preferred Option Endorsed by DPC

That Option 2 be pursued:

1. Continue to expressly permit certain aircraft activities in the rural zones (i.e. emergency, fire control, law enforcement, seasonal farming work, military aircraft and aircraft movements associated with Porters Ski and Recreation Area) without needing to meet certain rules/development standards; but reconsider the appropriateness of the range of permitted activities and the drafting and whether any additions may be necessary.
2. Continue to permit other aircraft facilities and movements subject to compliance with clearer, more comprehensive and in some instances more stringent rules. In order to develop such rules, it is recommended that:
 - a. Noise - Advice be sought from the Council's Acoustic Consultants as to appropriate noise levels, measurement of and management methods (and any noise exemptions), and the relevant New Zealand Standards to measure and assess noise associated with aircraft movements and helicopter landing areas referenced by the other District Plans.
 - b. Transport (traffic generation and car parking) - Advice be sought from Council's Consultant Transport Engineers when developing any relevant transport provisions.
3. The West Melton Aerodrome be subject to a special management approach.
4. Clearer activity-based definitions are developed to provide for the existing and anticipated aircraft facilities and operations in the District and to avoid overlap with other definitions. In particular:
 - a. Reconsider the existing definition of 'airport' and consider more appropriate definition(s) more suited to the existing and anticipated aircraft activities in the Selwyn District;
 - b. Consider specific definitions for 'Aerodrome', 'Airstrip' and 'Heli-landing area' (or similar) to specifically relate to activity-based rules;
 - c. Reconsider the definition of 'utility' and clause (f) as it relates to 'airport'. In particular, consider deleting the reference to 'airports';
 - d. Consider a definition of 'Aircraft operations' and take into account the Ministry for the Environment National Planning Standard Definition of 'Aircraft operations' when and if released;
 - e. Ensure overlap with the 'Recreational facility' definition and associated rules is avoided.
5. The objectives and policies are revised in line with the CRPS and the option that the Council endorses to pursue. In particular:
 - a. Ensure the Proposed Plan continues to include objectives and policies concerning the quality of the environment and managing incompatible development and reverse sensitivity effects in relation to aircraft facilities and operations;

- b. Consider stand-alone policies with respect to aircraft facilities and operations as opposed to generic objectives and policies sitting within the Transport objectives and policies as they do currently;
 - c. Retain policies relating to the safe and efficient operation of airfields in line with the recommendation to include approach surfaces rules.
- 6. That the references to the Hororata Airfield are deleted from the approach surfaces provisions in the Plan (Appendix 19 and the associated Rules (2.2.1, 3.7.1 and 5.12)) given Hororata Airfield is no longer operational.
- 7. That approach surfaces provisions be retained in relation to the West Melton Aerodrome and introduced in relation to the Springfield Aerodrome (subject to further engagement), and ensure all technical information is up to date and the provisions are clear and easy to interpret by plan users.
- 8. Note that rules will also need to be developed for the Living and Business Zones.

2.0 Summary of Feedback Received

2.1 Partner/Stakeholder Feedback

Canterbury Regional Council

No further comment in addition to the comments already received as part of the preferred option report review.

Canterbury Aero Club – West Melton Airfield

Supportive of creating separate provisions for the site.

Mahaanui Kurataiao Ltd

No further comment.

Horticulture New Zealand

Horticultural New Zealand wished to see air movements and associated activities remain a permitted activity when serving agricultural purposes.

New Zealand Defence Force

This party did not support or oppose the preferred option but rather wanted their own noise contours around the West Melton rifle range to reduce potential reverse sensitivity issues.

2.2 Public Feedback

The overall public feedback indicated a desire that small scale personally owned airstrips catering for recreational air movements should be a permitted activity under the District Plan, especially when these fields were generally subject to only a few air movements a week. These fields were also seen as potential havens for aircraft that either suffer mechanical fault or are unable to reach their intended destination due to inclement weather.

It was commonly viewed that restrictions should only occur on commercial activities that breach a particular cap in flight movements.

Additionally, a view expressed a few times was that flight movements should be restricted to day time only use.

Regarding the potential imposition of height restrictions on the approach and take off vectors at the Springfield Aerodrome site, potentially affected local farmers would not like to see unnecessary restrictions. Going forward from this position both the potentially local farmers and the gliding club are arranging to meet to discuss what restrictions are necessary for this site, and the outcome of this meeting will help to inform the content of the Proposed District Plan.

3.0 Analysis of Feedback Received

3.1 Restricting Recreational Flight Activities:

Analysis

It should be noted that the District Plan cannot control the aircraft and any noise created once it has left the ground. The District Plan can only control land use activities such as the airstrip and any aircraft up to the point of takeoff, and once it has landed.

A large theme derived out of the consultation phase was the support for recreational flight activities, and the wish to not see these unfairly restricted.

Part of the preferred option was that private/recreational airfield activities which are subject to a few air movements per week would continue to be a permitted activity. Therefore, the existing preferred option is consistent with feedback received by the community.

In addition to this all airfields within the Selwyn District are naturally restricted to operating during day time hours due to a lack of lights and CAA restrictions.

Conclusion

That recreational flying activities remain a permitted activity as long as they are maintained at a small intensity, scale, and character.

4.0 Recommended Option Post Engagement

The Project Team recommends that:

- The Preferred Option previously endorsed by DPC progresses to the 'Drafting and Section 32 Evaluation Phase'.