

Waikato District Plan Review

Submissions in relation to future use of the Te Kowhai Airfield

JOINT STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF L WATSON AND R RANBY IN
SUPPORT OF SUBMISSIONS BY SW RANBY AND R RANBY
(SUBMISSION NUMBERS 369 AND VFS4002)

Increased development and activity at the Te Kowhai Airfield

1. The Proposed District Plan provisions for development of the Te Kowhai airfield are intended to allow and encourage further development of the airfield to become something that is very different from what it has been in the past. The proposed activities and the lack of controls on them will enable the airfield to become a much more commercially driven and heavily used aerodrome and ultimately an airport.
2. That type of development of the airfield into something quite different would run against the intended future status of Te Kowhai itself, particularly the area around the airfield, outside of the village. The past use of the airstrip has allowed an acceptably low level of mainly private aerfield use, consistent with the nature of Te Kowhai.
3. The modest growth that is proposed for the village does not justify having provision alongside it for a large and busy aerodrome or airport. This should remain a largely private and club airfield, with a low level of training and other commercial flights.
4. We see that the s42A report recommends an annual limit on flight numbers. Although it is essential to have limits on the number of flights, an annual limit is pretty well meaningless on a day to day or week to week basis. There could be any number of flights clustered closely together at any particular time under an annual limit.
5. We would support a more carefully thought out limit on flight numbers, coupled with limitations on flight times.
6. Along with an annual flight limitation, there should also be limits on the number of flights per week and potentially limitations on the number of flights per day.

7. Limits on the flying times would also be necessary to strike the right balance between aerodrome use and preserving local amenity. Sunday flying times should be particularly restricted and a clear focus on day time flying rather than early morning, late evening, or night time flying.
8. We have heard from people near to existing aerodromes and airports that any use of this strip by jet powered aircraft will lead to unburnt aviation fuel drifting to the ground below the end of the strip. Although no one has said that there is any intention to operate jet aircraft at Te Kowhai, we have not seen any restriction against it. If there is truly no intention that there is any jet aircraft use, either private or commercial, then there should be no opposition to a condition preventing any jet powered aircraft from using the strip. We believe that should be included in the rules for the airfield, to give some small measure of assurance to property owners such as ourselves.

Obstacle Limitation Surface (“OLS”)

9. The OLS should not be made any more restrictive on use of private land than the constraints that already exist under the Operative District Plan. The proposed OLS would seriously limit development of the Ranby property that is close to the end of the airstrip, and would severely limit the use of other nearby properties as well.
10. We see that the s42A report recommends a partial return to the OLS that is specified in the ODP. We would support a complete return to the ODP version of the OLS restrictions. That will make the restrictions on use of private land (which are for private aircraft benefit) less severe than what is proposed by the PDP and by the airfield operator.

Status of the Gatenby property

11. We are unsure of the status of the Gatenby property at the end of original airport strip i.e. is it part of the airstrip that is intended under the PDP or is it only being used as part of the airfield through a resource consent? In our view there is no justification for including the Gatenby property in the airstrip. Our understanding is that it was originally authorised for airstrip use on the basis that the property owner made personal use of it, however we believe that is incorrect now and there is no remaining justification for inclusion of it in the airstrip.

Dated: 15 February 2021

Authenticated evidence of R Ranby and L Watson

