

**WAITOMO AERO CLUB SUBMISSION WITH REGARDS TO THE WAITOMO DISTRICT COUNCILS LTP.
AERODROME****Back Ground.**

The land was gifted to the Ratepayers & Residents of the TeKuiti Borough Council & surrounding district by the crown in 1961 for the purpose of an aerodrome, that means at no cost to the then council or any subsequent council since then.

It had a history for many years of being unusable by aircraft during the winter months up until the 1960's when user pressure necessated drainage to allow for a single formed runway. Prior to this, little was done to maintain the standards required by the Air Dept at the time as a registered aerodrome. Any capital works in the past, whether as improvements, or regulatory became intergenerational as part of the original use for purpose & continual year round operation.

To comply with recent H & S regulations, council spent upward of \$100,000. security fencing the greater aerodrome operational area, installing electric gates, reforming & sealing access to the club house. This was done with no consultation or input from the aerodrome users or stakeholders at the time & was considered reckless spending by the previous Council & considered in time to be an ongoing maintenance issue due to its cosmetic construction. The recent unnecessary overlay with roading chip of the perfectly good runway is another example of the lack of communication with aerodrome users.

The Aero Clubs position, it considers the aerodrome as a community recreation facility, no different to the pool, netball courts, library, skate park, BMX track, Rugby & other district parks, therefore its attributable benefit to the area it serves is far greater than the 20% tabled in the LTP.

In fact, providing the base for agricultural aircraft operations for 70 years it has played the most significant part in the development of the greater rural area, generating the wealth that has contributed to the WDC rate base it enjoys today, therefore it's immeasurable.


For some time, Waitomo Aero Club members have been exempt from landing fees. This has been appreciated & contributed to an increase in our membership to the 33 it is today, several of these are from outside of the immediate area. We class these members as regulars, non regular, seldom & never, so it would be hard to strike a process that's fair & equitable to all of them. Prior to Covid, there were extensive movements within NZ flight training institutions, particularly the Hamilton & Ardmore airports, that if captured could result in revenue collected to offset aerodrome costs. After a council camera scheme to do just this failed, an agency has been employed to monitor & collect this information for council staff to process & charge according. We believe this is a time & costly system to administer, plus there hasn't been a return to pre Covid levels of activity to generate sufficient revenue to justify its use. We have researched many aero clubs

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in a similar situation as Waitomo & received feedback of the various schemes they have in place. Some have elected to terminate their recording provider due to cost but retain a radio monitoring system for incident, H&S & CAA reporting purposes. Most regular users pay an annual one off fee depending on the aerodrome ownership with the honesty option for casuals to pay online from information provided & displayed in a prominent position. This would be acceptable to us but would require council to give outside users the opportunity to pay monthly or quarterly fees based on historical data. Because of its location, TeKuiti proves an important fuel stop for transiting aircraft. This is an added benefit to council as it collects a levy on the fuel uplifted.

Recreation flying is Waitomo Aero Clubs main activity which includes flight training with our instructors available most Sundays. Flying competitions are keenly contested by members, regularly representing Waitomo at both Regional & National levels. While it is not as buoyant as it was & probably will never be, our survival depends on membership & if council insists on raising its fees we will lose this membership the fuel levy will reduce & the club house will become vacant.

Our main objection to the WDC LTP as presented, is the balance in the overall Attributable Benefit of the Aerodrome to the District recorded as 20% . This figure should be revisited, reconsidered & adjusted accordingly to give a representation of the valuable asset to the Community & District it essentially is.


WAITOMO AERO CLUB (SEC)

