

MINUTES OF THE RANGIORA AIRFIELD ADVISORY GROUP HELD AT 5.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY, 22 APRIL 2026, IN THE CANTERBURY AERO CLUB ROOMS AT THE RANGIORA AIRFIELD, MERTON ROAD, FERNSIDE

PRESENT

Steve Noad (SN) [Chairperson]	John Dugdale (JD)
David Harnett (DH)	Buzz Harvey (BH)
Iain McPhail (IM)	Keith Vallance (KV)
Philip Redmond (PR) [Deputy Mayor]	Owen Stewart (OS) [Waimakariri District Council]

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Duncan Roxborough (DR) [Waimakariri District Council]
Kay Rabe (KB) [Waimakariri District Council]

1. WELCOME

The Chairperson welcomed the members present and declared the meeting open at 5.30 pm.

2. APOLOGIES

Bruce Drake (BD)

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group – 25 March 2025

Moved: K Vallance

Seconded: I McPhail

THAT the Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group:

- (a) **Confirms**, as a true and accurate record, the circulated Minutes of the Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group meeting held on 25 March 2025.

CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING (From Minutes)

OS raised the following matter arising from the previous minutes:

4.1 Cables across Ashley River

OS noted the installation of small devices attached to the new 66 kV cables across the Ashley/Rakahuri River. Independent research had confirmed that these devices were bird diverters intended to increase wire visibility for birds and protect local species. OS advised that the diverters were not designed as aviation markers and were unlikely to significantly improve visibility for pilots, although their number might provide some incidental benefit.

IM asked about the maximum height of the diverters, and OS confirmed that they were positioned below 25 metres, which was under the threshold requiring aviation marking. Concerns were raised regarding past incidents, including microlights landing in the river near the pylons, and whether the new devices could pose any additional risk. OS undertook to circulate an aviation safety notice regarding the cables across the Ashley/Rakahuri River.

OS reported that he had spoken with members of the Canterbury Recreational Aircraft Club (CRAC) during a visit to the local club. Their informal consensus was that no additional aviation warning was necessary. They noted that other nearby cables were unmarked and that pilots were generally aware of their presence. However, this feedback was not considered representative of the wider aviation community. If individuals or groups still had concerns, they were encouraged to raise an aviation-related safety concern for further consideration formally.

4.2 Hangar development at the west end

OS confirmed that the hangar development at the west end of the airfield (Lots 95–98) was proceeding. A discussion was held with the hangar owner regarding whether to use the existing water toby or the alternative, noting that the original design allowed for four hangars, but only one would be developed at this stage. The owner advised that, for simplicity, the unused Toby could be closed off.

4.3 91/95 fuel Installation Update

OS noted that Allied had not yet provided the final design. It appeared that they had completed the technical design, but the main challenge concerned the administration of the fuel supply. Allied had indicated a preference for issuing a single consolidated bill to the airfield rather than managing multiple individual accounts. A discussion was held with the Council's General Manager Community and Recreation, C Brown, who advised that the Council was unlikely to administer the supply on behalf of the airfield due to the associated administrative cost and complexity.

In response to a question from SN, OS confirmed that both 91-octane and 95-octane fuel tanks would be installed.

IM questioned the need to install a 91-octane fuel tank, noting that cost savings rather than operational benefits generally drove the choice of 91-octane. He observed that aircraft with 80-hp engines could operate on either 91- or 95-octane fuel, while aircraft with 100-hp engines could operate only on 95-octane fuel.

The RAAG discussed the relative benefits of 91-octane versus 95-octane fuel. It was highlighted that offering 91-octane fuel introduced additional risk without providing meaningful value, given that all aircraft could safely operate on 95-octane fuel.

PR asked whether the fuel dispensing system could be card-operated. OS noted that this was a possibility; however, Allied did not wish to be involved in administering such a system.

OS was requested to verify with Allied which system would be used for fuel dispensing.

4.4 Security Fence and Gate Design

OS reported that he had been working on the design of the security fence and gate. He highlighted the existing gates, which would remain in place as they had a 4.5-metre opening, matching the width of the current chain gates. He also noted the inclusion of pedestrian gates, explaining that a pedestrian gate had been added near the remote gate openings to provide convenient access without the need to operate the larger vehicle gate. All other elements of the fence design were considered standard, with no significant issues identified.

BH queried the proposed width of the gates located near the toilet area. OS advised that the design include a relatively wide double gate. It was anticipated that one side of the double gate would be permanently locked, with the other serving as the primary operational gate for regular access. Both gates could be opened when required to allow wider turning movements or accommodate larger vehicles.

The RAAG agreed that it might be an appropriate opportunity to re-examine the placement of the fence and gates.

PR questioned the required height of the fence, and OS confirmed it had to be at least 1.2 metres.

IM enquired whether the fence needed to be installed immediately, noting that if a hangar were eventually built in that location (Lot 2), the fence would no longer be required. He suggested that the existing old wooden fence could remain in place until a hangar development proceeded, to avoid unnecessary expenditure. OS noted that the timing of any future hangar construction was uncertain and had been considered in earlier discussions. However, compliance requirements meant that some form of fencing needed to be installed now, as the current arrangement did not meet regulatory standards.

The RAAG discussed alternative fence routing, including extending the fence along the front of the Aero Club area near the car park to reduce the amount of new fencing required. This raised questions about public access and when access restrictions would apply. It was noted that if public access were restricted, a mechanism would be required to meet visitors at the gate, as they would not be able to enter freely. The RAAG acknowledged that this approach could introduce operational complications.

In response to a question from IM, OS explained that other airfields had successfully used combination locks that could be opened from either side. Electronic access systems had also been investigated, including the use of proximity cards to simplify gate operation and ensure gates were consistently opened and closed. However, the cost of installing electronic systems at the required number of gates exceeded the cost of installing the fencing itself. Combination locks were raised as a potential lower-cost alternative worth considering. The main concern was to ensure security while allowing authorised access.

BH expressed concern that public pedestrian access to the airfield was limited to businesses such as CRAC. OS noted that, following a discussion with Rob Kitto, clarification had been sought from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regarding the meaning of the term "secure" within the regulatory requirements. The CAA advised that security was concerned with preventing unauthorised persons from accessing restricted areas and further stated that one acceptable method to achieve this was to lock the gates.

DR reported that the CAA had confirmed that signage alone indicating restricted public access was insufficient to meet the requirements of the Civil Aviation Act 1988. The CAA advised that it would ultimately be the Council's decision to determine the level of risk it was willing to accept in ensuring the airfield remained secure. The CAA also indicated that, despite any flexibility in approach, pedestrian gates should be locked to meet security expectations.

JD noted that it would be useful to understand the incidence of public injuries reported to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), as this information would help the Council determine the appropriate level of risk to accept when setting security measures for the airfield.

IM observed that the clubrooms at Timaru Airfield had two gates fitted with PIN-code access on one side, and users could reach around and manually release the lock on the other side, allowing the gate to be opened. Despite this, the CAA had approved these gates as compliant with security requirements. IM noted that this should be taken into consideration when determining the security requirements for Rangiora Airfield.

The RAAG proceeded to discuss various options, including:

- Securing only the pedestrian gates at CRAC, rather than locking all gates.
- Erecting signage demarcating the public-restricted area at seven-metre intervals.
- Installing a marked pathway leading to CRAC, along with signage at the access gate instructing visitors not to stray from the designated route.

The RAAG agreed that staff should push back on the requirement for locked pedestrian gates, as this would negatively impact CRAC, which relied on public access for weekend activities.

OS confirmed that the two fuel tanker access track gates would be replaced at the same time as the other fencing and gate upgrades. He also confirmed that the public toilets would remain accessible.

In response to a question from PR, OS advised that staff had received an estimate approximately two years earlier, indicating that the cost of fencing on the northern side of the airfield up to the black hangar would be around \$25,000. The Council planned to begin fencing and progressively work around the perimeter to the southern side. The replacement was expected to occur as part of a multi-year programme, potentially over around five years. The cost of fencing along the boundary adjacent to Dan Smith's proposed development would be shared, should that development proceed, as the fence line would need to be realigned.

At this stage, the immediate priority was to close off the open section of fencing to maintain compliance and security.

DR confirmed that funding for the fencing project had been included within the Aeronautical Study Budget, which also needed to cover the taxiway renovation. A total of \$26,000 had been allocated for the fencing component, with the remainder of the budget assigned to the taxiway works. He acknowledged that this pricing had been set several years earlier and that costs might now need to be reviewed. If required, staff would prepare a submission requesting additional funding to top up the fencing budget.

BH sought clarity on the style of fencing to be used. OS explained that several options were available. The CAA had already approved the fence type preferred by Dan Smith for his proposed development and was available for use. However, the preferred option was a knotted rectangular mesh fence, which presented a smarter, more modern appearance than the standard diamond-pattern hurricane fence. Although the knotted rectangular fence was more expensive to purchase initially, it required fewer support wires and fewer posts, resulting in a similar overall cost, with only a slight increase.

OS advised that the next step would be to submit a report to the Council's Audit and Risk Committee on the risk assessment of airfield access. He undertook to include all concerns raised by the RAAG in the report and to ascertain what security measures had been implemented at other certified airfields.

4.5 Reopening of Taxiway

OS noted that the RAAG had requested that staff consult with the airfield users most affected by the proposed reopening of the taxiway and report back to the RAAG. He commented that if the taxiway were not reopened, additional fencing would need to be installed, which would incur further costs.

BH observed that the area in question was a taxiway and had always been intended for that purpose. While some individuals may have believed it was not a taxiway, clarification confirmed that it was a designated taxiway that had simply been closed off. He noted that there was no reason the taxiway should not be reopened, as the surface had been finished to a high standard and was ready for use.

IM observed that the RAAG had previously discussed the need to reopen the taxiway, as it had originally been designated for aircraft movement. He acknowledged that some users who currently park vehicles in the area might prefer that it remain closed; however, it was agreed that they simply needed to be informed that the taxiway was being reinstated for its original purpose. Reopening the taxiway would not remove access for any users, although approximately four cars would no longer be able to park in the middle of the taxiway.

5. MAINTENANCE

5.1 Taxiway repair project update

Seeding of the taxiway and runway had been carried out, and the site was now simply awaiting the establishment of grass.

5.2 Airfield road upgrades works update

OS advised that a walkthrough was scheduled for the following week, once DR had returned from leave. The purpose of the walkthrough was to identify any outstanding issues. He noted that some concerns had already been raised regarding the shoulders, surface fragility, and related matters, and confirmed that these would be reviewed during the site visit.

5.3 Irrigation Investigations Update

DR reported that the matter was ongoing.

5.4 Water and wastewater Project Update

No discussion emanated from this point.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

No health and safety concerns were raised.

7. AIRFIELD INCIDENTS

No incidents were reported during the period under review.

8. NOISE COMPLAINTS

OS reported that he had recently been on site with the contractors undertaking the grassing works. During this time, Stuart had been running an engine on a test rig, and OS noted that the noise was noticeable from that end of the airfield. He advised that he wished to obtain feedback from users located in that area to determine whether the activity was causing any disturbance or concern.

BH commented that, in his view, Stuart had a good level of respect among those working in that area of the airfield for the activities he carried out. He suggested that users were, at present, tolerating the noise; however, he noted that it was extremely loud. He added that he had spoken with a couple of people based in that area, and they agreed that the noise was significant.

OS advised that his intention was to take no immediate action and instead wait to see whether any feedback was received from users regarding the noise. He noted that other airfields, when undertaking similar engine-running activities, used purpose-built test rigs or relocated the activity to more isolated areas. He added that some facilities also used attenuators or other noise-reduction measures. However, at this stage, as no formal complaints had been received, he wished to raise the matter to ensure awareness and monitoring.

BH suggested it might be useful to raise the matter with Stuart, noting that the issue had been mentioned but no action had been proposed at this stage. He recommended advising Stuart of the feedback received and asking him to consider possible mitigation options, should concerns arise in the future.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Civil Aviation Authority New Zealand (CAA) 139 Qualifying discussion

SN noted the Part 139 presentation delivered earlier by Nick Jackson. A response from N Jackson had been circulated the previous day. SN commented that he was extremely disappointed that none of the concerns raised by the RAAG had been addressed. He reiterated his view that implementing the limitations of Part 139 would not resolve the safety issues currently present at the airfield and stated that he remained open to being convinced otherwise.

IM commented that, in his view, the safety issues referred to in the Part 139 discussion largely related to matters occurring in the air, many of which were not directly relevant to Rangiora Airfield. He noted that once a pilot entered the cockpit, responsibility for safety lay with the CAA. He stated that he could not see how the issues raised by N Jackson related to the concerns previously identified by the RAAG.

BH stated that, having reviewed the material, he could not identify anything substantive in the response. He commented that much of it appeared to be high-level or generic, with no concrete detail. He noted that the content felt more like “fluff” and lacked direct answers to the issues raised by the RAAG. He added that although the response referred to “offering clarity” in several places, it was unclear who that clarity was intended for or what it was supposed to address. BH reiterated that none of the specific questions put to Nick Jackson had been addressed.

DR noted that, following the previous meeting, two actions had been agreed upon. The first was to follow up with N Jackson regarding the list of benefits associated with the Part 139 qualification system, as it was understood that he had heard the questions and concerns raised during the session. This was seen as an opportunity for him to clearly outline the advantages of adopting Part 139. The second action related to the additional questions raised by the RAAG about where various matters sat within the process, specifically, where the safety assessment, risk assessment, determination, and consultation requirements were addressed. RD noted that two documents: one outlining the perceived benefits of Part 139, and another walking through the relevant clause in Part 139 in relation to the questions raised, particularly around the safety and risk assessment process, had since been circulated. RD commented that his understanding from the material provided was that no final decisions had yet been made. However, it was noted that work on the safety assessment was currently underway.

SN stated that, based on the information provided to date, he personally could not support adopting Part 139. He noted that, as things currently stood, he did not believe the case had been made for why Rangiora Airfield should transition to Part 139 requirements.

PR noted that the Council might take some reassurance from the structured framework that applies to a qualifying airfield under Part 139. He acknowledged that the information provided to date was somewhat repetitive and lacked detail. Still, he highlighted the final point in the response: once the outcome of the safety review was communicated, the CAA would determine whether Rangiora Airfield should proceed toward certification. PR observed that this suggested the decision might ultimately be taken out of the Council's hands.

BH noted that if the decision were ultimately taken out of the Council's hands, then the CAA would be required to complete the safety assessment and demonstrate the need for certification. PR added that he had gained the impression that the CAA was already undertaking that safety review. DR confirmed that the CAA had indicated the review was currently in progress.

It was observed that, depending on the Director's determination, the airfield might be required to become compliant with Part 139. However, even though the decision remained with the Council, the RAAG's position remained relevant.

PR commented that he did not see any significant downside to becoming a certified airfield and questioned what the negatives might be. He noted that there appeared to be a relatively small cost associated with certification over the first five years. IM responded that certification would require the CAA to regularly review the airfield's records, which would increase administrative workload for staff to ensure all documentation remained compliant.

PR noted, however, that if the airfield were certified, the CAA would not charge for these inspections. In contrast, if the airfield remained uncertified, the CAA would charge an hourly rate for any compliance checks undertaken. PR added that the previously discussed indicative cost was not substantial. IM recalled that the estimate was approximately \$10,000 for five years.

BH acknowledged that increased CAA involvement could be significant and, in some cases, burdensome, noting that the CAA was often regarded as difficult for the average operator to deal with. However, he also recognised PR's point that if the Council had already met all requirements, such as fencing and documentation, it was effectively demonstrating compliance on its own. BH commented that, from this perspective, it might be preferable for the Council to continue managing its own compliance processes, as it was doing effectively at present. He questioned why an external party would need to oversee or monitor the airfield's performance when the Council was already meeting the necessary standards and "ticking the boxes" itself.

DR observed that, regardless of whether the airfield became certified, some form of oversight would always exist. He noted that if an incident occurred, agencies such as WorkSafe could still undertake an investigation, meaning external scrutiny was unavoidable. He added that one of the listed benefits of certification related to the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015. Under section 3.3, certification was presented as a means for the Council, as the airfield owner and operator, to demonstrate that it had taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure safety.

SN reiterated that his primary concern was that the safety issues previously raised by the RAAG were still unaddressed. He noted that people continued to operate without clear guidance and that the response received appeared to avoid engaging with the substantive issues.

OS explained that this was one of the key reasons the Council's Chief Executive had written to the CAA Director. The intention was to make clear that the Council had already taken all reasonable steps within its authority: a Safety Management Manual was in place, an Operations Manual had been developed, and a Memorandum of Understanding existed to encourage good practice among airfield users. However, OS emphasised that the MoU was only a guidance document and did not confer any enforcement powers. He reiterated that neither the Council nor the RAAG had any authority to compel pilots to read NOTAMs, comply with circuit procedures, or meet operational requirements. These matters sat solely with the CAA. As a result, the only practical influence the Council currently had was to speak with users informally.

IM added that when concerns were reported to the CAA, no feedback was provided on what action, if any, had been taken.

IM noted that certification would not fundamentally change where responsibility lay if an incident occurred. He observed that even without Part 139 certification, the Council could still demonstrate that it had met all relevant requirements and taken all reasonably practicable steps. He questioned why the Council would need to state that it met the requirements of Part 139 when it was already complying with the underlying safety obligations. BH added that, in the event of an incident, accountability would rest with the same parties regardless of certification status, and certification would not shift that responsibility.

KV noted that all of the life-threatening incidents that had occurred around the airfield to date would not have been prevented by Part 139 certification. He stated that none of those events was related to matters that Part 139 would have influenced, and therefore certification would have made no difference in those cases.

SN stated that everyone shared the goal of maintaining a safe airfield and acknowledged that the Council had done an excellent job with the measures implemented to date. However, he expressed concern that the CAA had provided little meaningful support, despite safety oversight being its responsibility. He noted that the CAA had not taken steps to "lift the game" regarding the issues repeatedly raised by the RAAG.

IM suggested that it would be useful to speak directly with other airfields that had transitioned to Part 139 certification. He noted that there would have been a time when those airfields were not certified, followed by a period after certification, and it would be helpful to understand what had changed for them in practice.

JD agreed that this information would be valuable, particularly for understanding whether those airfields observed any increased involvement from the CAA and whether certification had altered their day-to-day operations.

IM observed that many of the physical changes already under discussion, such as fencing and gates, appeared likely to occur regardless of whether the airfield was certified. The key question, in his view, was how those measures would be managed. He also noted that, based on previous discussions, the security level required under Part 139 was scalable, and that non-commercial air transport operations did not require the same level of security as at larger commercial airports. This suggested that some requirements could be applied more proportionately, such as installing gates that were secure but not necessarily locked at all times. IM concluded that further clarity was needed on these matters and questioned who the Council or RAAG could approach to obtain that information.

BH questioned whether the Council's current approach was to rely on its existing systems and staff to maintain compliance and then wait to see whether the CAA ultimately required certification. He suggested that the Council appeared to be operating on the basis that, unless the CAA directed otherwise, there was no need to pursue Part 139 certification, as it would not add meaningful value to the airfield's safety or operations.

PR noted that he could not speak on behalf of the Council, but observed that, in general, bureaucratic organisations tended to favour structured frameworks and documented processes. He commented that the Council was already familiar with such reporting requirements and routinely dealt with similar material, which might make certification appear less daunting from their perspective. PR added that he could not predict how elected members might vote, but he questioned what harm there would be in becoming certified.

BH asked what additional involvement the CAA would have if the airfield became certified. PR responded that the CAA was already involved to some extent. While certification might increase that involvement, the Council would not be charged for it, as the annual certification fee would cover those activities. He noted that certification would only be granted once all requirements were met, and the Council was already progressing toward many of those elements, with fencing likely to be one of the final components.

BH cautioned that, across the aviation sector, the CAA was widely regarded as creating complications rather than resolving them. He expressed concern that the CAA was not addressing the core safety issues at Rangiora and that their focus appeared to be on matters already well managed, rather than on the problems repeatedly raised by the RAAG.

OS noted that the Council's Chief Executive had obtained a clear commitment from the CAA Director that the CAA would become actively involved in addressing the airspace issues at Rangiora Airfield. He explained that this commitment was now documented, giving the Council a basis for returning to the CAA and requesting specific assistance. OS stated that the Council intended to outline the actions it believed were necessary and to ask the CAA how it planned to deliver on its commitment. He emphasised that the Council would be expecting the CAA to demonstrate progress on these matters before the end of the year.

DR noted that both certification and non-certification pathways had implications, but drew attention to section 2.5 of the report. He highlighted the statement that, while CAA surveillance was primarily focused on the aerodrome operator's responsibilities, namely ground-based matters, the existence of an active regulatory relationship could also contribute to increased safety awareness across the wider airfield environment. The report suggested that certification could improve alignment between ground operations and airborne activities. RD acknowledged that this was not a quantified measure of reduced incidents, nor did it provide concrete evidence of improved safety outcomes at airfields that had become certified. However, he interpreted the intent as positioning Part 139 certification as a recognised quality threshold. He suggested that certification might create indirect benefits, such as pilots perceiving that CAA oversight was more visible at a certified aerodrome and therefore adjusting their behaviour accordingly. In his view, the CAA's presence, real or perceived, might encourage some users to "lift their game."

BH observed that the report's reference to CAA surveillance occurring "once every three months" was vague and unlikely to withstand scrutiny. He observed that the statement about improving alignment between ground-based operations and airborne activities lacked any explanation of how such outcomes would actually be achieved. He suggested that, as written, the statement amounted to an assertion rather than a demonstrable benefit.

OS added context regarding the CAA's potential involvement. He explained that, following the Chief Executive's discussion with the CAA Director, one of the CAA's senior safety advisers had already contacted him to seek clarity on the specific airspace issues at Rangiora. OS and SN had discussed the key concerns, and OS had provided the adviser with a list of matters requiring assistance. These included pilots failing to read NOTAMS, comply with published circuit requirements, and make appropriate radio calls. OS noted that the adviser had taken this information away to prepare a report for the Director, outlining recommended actions the CAA could take at Rangiora Airfield. He stated that he

did not yet know what the recommendations would be, but the CAA now had a clear understanding of the issues the Council and RAAG were seeking help with.

OS outlined an additional option available to the Council under the Part 139 qualifying requirements. He explained that, if the CAA Director were to require the airfield to become a qualifying aerodrome, the Council could respond by demonstrating an equivalent level of safety. OS noted that the rules allowed an operator to present evidence showing that, even without formal certification, it had already met the substantive safety requirements. He advised that much of this work had already been completed. The airfield had a Safety Management Manual, an Operations Manual detailing how the airfield was to be maintained and operated, and a Fly Neighbourly document, which had been provided to Nick Jackson. OS also confirmed that he had completed the rules matrix typically associated with a qualifying aerodrome certificate, setting out how the Council complied with each requirement. OS emphasised that this meant the Council retained the option to go back to the Director and state *“while the CAA may require the airfield to become qualifying, the Council could demonstrate an equivalent level of safety based on the systems and documentation already in place”*.

DH commented that it was difficult to identify examples of effective CAA intervention, noting that in his experience, the CAA was largely absent. He stated that he seldom saw or heard from them and questioned whether they actively contributed to resolving issues at the airfield. This lack of visible engagement made it hard to understand what practical value their involvement would add.

OS observed that over 35 years in the aviation sector, he had worked for the CAA, in Part 145 organisations, in airlines, and in airfield management, and had also dealt extensively with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). He stated that throughout his career, he had consistently found individuals within these regulatory agencies helpful and constructive. OS acknowledged that others in the industry might not always have shared that experience, but emphasised that, in his view, maintaining a collegial and professional working relationship with regulators had consistently led to positive, cooperative engagement.

During the discussion, a concern was raised about the CAA's handling of confidentiality. It was noted that in some members' experience, submitting a CAA005 incident report, which was intended to be confidential, did not reliably protect the identity of the person lodging it. Names frequently became known within the aviation community, which made people reluctant to submit incident reports for fear of being labelled as “dobbing people in.” The same issue applied to Aviation-Related Concerns (ARCs), which were also meant to be confidential and often concerned matters on the airfield rather than aircraft operations. Confidentiality breaches seemed common, and individuals who raised concerns were sometimes unfairly stigmatised. This was an area where the CAA needed to improve its processes significantly. The CAA was not a trusted organisation.

SN noted that RAAG had previously invited the CAA to visit the airfield, particularly on weekends, when activity was at its peak. He stated that such a visit would have allowed the CAA to observe operations firsthand and engage directly with pilots. SN suggested that a CAA representative could approach a pilot after landing and check basic compliance matters such as logbooks, medical certificates, and whether they were carrying the current AIP. He commented that this type of visible oversight would have been a practical and meaningful way for the CAA to understand the issues occurring at Rangiora.

OS clarified that the intention was not to conduct “spot checks” in a punitive sense, but rather for the CAA to be physically present at the airfield and engage directly with pilots. He suggested that meaningful conversations, such as asking a pilot why they joined the circuit without making a radio call, or why they entered established traffic, would be far more effective in addressing the high-risk behaviours occurring at Rangiora.

The RAAG discussed whether it could be confident that all necessary safety measures had been met. It was noted that the Safety Review had commenced, and it was acknowledged that the review could potentially trigger obligations under Part 139, specifically section 139.23(b). SN observed that the CAA's view was that the level of consultation undertaken had been appropriate and had enabled the safety reviews to be completed. The RAAG sought clarification on how many responses had actually been received during that consultation process.

OS noted that three responses had ultimately been received during the consultation process. It was reported that when the initial consultation request was issued, no responses were received. The Chairperson of the RAAG later submitted one response. A contact list was subsequently provided to the CAA so that consultation material could be sent directly to airfield users. Following this, three responses were received in total, including one from RAAG. These responses formed part of the Aeronautical Study.

The RAAG agreed that a clear timeline for the delivery of the completed Safety Review was needed. Members agreed that, given the review had been ongoing for approximately three years, it was reasonable to seek a defined timeframe rather than continue waiting indefinitely.

PR caused the pressing of the CAA for completion, which could lead to an outcome that might not be favourable; however, if the CAA's Director required the review to be completed, the Council would be obliged to comply. SN questioned the value of undertaking additional work that may not be necessary, particularly given confidence in the robustness of existing safety systems.

9.2 Safety Management Manual Finalisation

Responding to a question from SN, OS explained that the Safety Management Manual had not yet been uploaded to the Council website. One outstanding matter remained unresolved: the definition of the operational area. It was noted that this information needed to be incorporated into the manual so that the CAA could clearly understand the operational area boundaries. Work on this component was still in progress at the time of the meeting.

DR noted that once the remaining operational area information had been incorporated into the Safety Management Manual, the next step would be an internal review by the Council's Chief Executive. Following this review, the manual would be submitted to the Council's Community Recreation Committee for formal adoption. Once adopted, the current version on the Council's website would be replaced with the updated manual. This process was expected to be completed by 21 May.

9.3 Budgets and Submissions to the Council's 2026/27 Annual Plan

OS explained the upcoming submissions process for the Council's 2026/27 Annual Plan. Members were reminded that this process allowed the RAAG to propose initiatives they wished to see implemented on the airfield, after which a budget could be developed and applications made for inclusion in both the Council's Annual Plan and the Long Term Plan.

DR observed that this could include projects such as whether an all-weather runway should be signalled as a future requirement. He noted that two categories of planning needed to be addressed: items to be requested for the next financial year's budget, and longer-term projects suitable for inclusion in the subsequent Long-Term Plan, such as a sealed runway.

Discussion then turned to the condition of the northern half of the runway. It was confirmed that this area was intended to be re-grassed, and the RAAG considered whether to request funding now to undertake reseeding in the next financial year. Similarly, it was noted that the current allocation for taxiway renovations had been fully utilised. The RAAG discussed whether additional funding should be sought to continue taxiway improvement works in the coming year.

The RAAG agreed that submission should be made to the Council on the following priorities:

- Installation or renewal of runway designators on the remaining two strips.
- Reseeding of the northern half of the runway in the next financial year.
- Consideration of additional taxiway works, noting that the existing budget allocation for taxiway renovations had been fully utilised.
- Renovation of that piece of fencing along Merton Road adjacent to the RWY 25 threshold.

Responding to questions, OS confirmed that the gaps on the taxiway had not yet been renovated, as they were currently in acceptable condition and had allowed for crossing points during earlier works. The intention had been to address these areas once the remainder of the surface had fully established; however, they could be included in future maintenance requests if required.

It was noted that submissions on the Council's 2026/27 Annual Plan were due to close on Monday, 20 April 2026. DR was asked to determine whether a late staff submission could be lodged to ensure the identified priorities were captured.

JD questioned when the submissions were due for the Council's next Long Term Plan, so that the RAAG could make a submission on the proposed sealing of the runway. DR noted that submissions for the next Long Term Plan would be prepared around November 2026. Members agreed that the sealed-runway project should be signalled in the upcoming Long-Term Plan cycle.

SN remarked that a previous estimate of approximately \$2.5 million had been obtained, although costs were now expected to be higher. It was suggested that an indicative figure of approximately \$3 million could be used for planning purposes, subject to confirmation. The proposed runway dimensions were understood to be approximately 20 metres wide and 1,100 metres long, though this would need to be verified. It was acknowledged that the Long-Term Plan process could be challenging due to uncertainty regarding the development of the Ashley/Rakahuri River stopbanks. Still, it was agreed that the priority at this stage was to ensure the project was formally signalled so that the opportunity to include it in future planning was not lost.

9.4 Global Positioning System (GPS) Landing Approach Discussion

SN expressed his confusion about whether the proposed system constituted an Instrument Landing System (ILS). He noted that, at the previous meeting, clarification had been sought to avoid referring to it as an ILS; however, OS's notes indicated that, according to the Aeropath documentation, the procedure was indeed classified as an ILS-type instrument approach, specifically a GPS/Lateral Navigation (LNAV).

OS highlighted the operational concept, noting that under such a system, a pilot would fly to a defined GPS reference point and, if the airfield was in sight, proceed to land. If the airfield were not visible, the pilot would be required to execute a missed approach. It was emphasised that, despite being GPS-based, the approach still required protection through the appropriate obstacle limitation surfaces.

SN noted with concern that the Rangiora Airfield appeared to be the only one in the country unable to implement such an approach. OS explained that, under an instrument approach, the obstacle limitation surface requirements differed from those applicable to VFR operations. The current VFR surface used a 1:20 slope, whereas an instrument approach required a 1:40 slope. The runway strip width also formed the base of the protected area: the existing strip was 60 metres wide, but for an instrument approach, the initial protected width increased to 80 metres, with the fan expanding further outward at a 1:10 divergence. This would result in the capture of a significant number of trees and obstacles beyond the current strip.

OS clarified that the requirement related to the runway strip, not the physical runway itself. Members queried how other airfields, such as Westport or Hokitika, had implemented similar procedures. OS reported that the designer had been contacted for clarification, and he had confirmed that the proposed procedure was unequivocally an instrument approach, and therefore, the full obstacle limitation surface requirements applied. This advice was consistent with the information provided by the CAA.

IM questioned whether the proposed instrument approach would pose issues for the airfield, particularly regarding tree removal at the northern end. OS advised that any affected obstacles were on private land, adding complexity to the matter. The existing obstacle limitation surfaces were already documented in the Waimakariri District Plan, including the relevant dimensions and angular requirements. If the airfield wished to change these surfaces to those required for an instrument approach, a District Plan change would be necessary. The Government had placed a moratorium on District Plan changes for two years. As a result, the earliest opportunity to initiate a plan change would be in 2027. Only at that point could a new obstacle limitation surface, suitable for an instrument approach, be formally introduced.

OS noted that the moratorium on District Plan changes did not prevent preparatory work from continuing. At the same time, no formal amendments could be progressed until at least 2027, but planning and preliminary assessment could still occur in the interim. This would allow the Council to be ready to act once the moratorium was lifted.

IM acknowledged that the delay provided a clear and defensible explanation should questions arise regarding why the instrument approach had not yet been implemented. Members noted that some stakeholders had already queried the lack of progress, and it was agreed that the inability to initiate a District Plan change provided a straightforward and factual response.

JD asked whether, if the airfield became 139-qualified, the CAA could ask the Council to remove the trees located at the far end of the airfield. OS advised that the CAA could not compel the removal of those trees because the obstacle limitation surfaces for an instrument approach were not currently included in the Waimakariri District Plan. Under the existing VFR obstacle limitation surfaces documented in the District Plan, the Council had the authority to require the removal of infringing vegetation. However, this authority did not extend to the requirements associated with an instrument approach.

BH noted that, once a District Plan change became possible, the Council could seek to introduce new obstacle limitation surfaces appropriate for an instrument approach. If adopted, this would give Council the ability to enforce the removal of obstacles. However, because the airfield was a designated site, any change to its designation would require public notification. This would allow the community to submit feedback, including objections based on cost or other impacts.

BH questioned whether the benefits of pursuing an instrument approach justified the complexity and potential difficulties involved, as the process appeared increasingly challenging. OS observed that, in discussions with the designer, the Canterbury Airspace User Group had expressed reservations about supporting the proposal. Their concern related to the additional operational complexity that an instrument approach at the airfield could introduce. The designer advised that one possible way to address these concerns would be to restrict the use of the approach to emergency operations only.

KV noted that the instrument approach had originally been intended for use by the general flying public. However, during discussions within the Canterbury Airspace User Group, concerns were raised about potential operational impacts. It was a concern that operators could use the approach for training or practice, which could result in the airfield becoming congested or unavailable for other users. In light of these concerns, the Airspace User Group reconsidered its position. They subsequently advised that they only support the procedure if its use were restricted to emergency operations. As a result, the proposal was

revised so that the instrument approach would be available solely for emergency response purposes and not for general aviation or training activities.

Subsequent to further discussion, it was agreed as follows:

Moved: Keith Vallance

Seconded: B Harvey

THAT the Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group:

- (a) **Rescinds** its previous decision for the Rangiora Airfield to adopt a Global Positioning System (GPS) Landing Approach.

CARRIED

OS undertook to continue to work with Aeropath, as the designer had offered to provide the additional survey data required to assess the obstacle limitation surfaces for the proposed instrument approach. He advised that a substantial amount of digital survey information already existed for all approach paths; however, further widening of the surveyed area appeared necessary.

9.5 Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) Requirement for soil

SN asked for clarification on how the airfield had complied with the HAIL-site requirements when topsoil was imported for recent works. DR explained that clean topsoil could be brought onto the site, provided the underlying ground was not disturbed. When GSL was contracted, they were required to supply certification confirming the soil source was clean. Because the soil was placed on top of the existing surface without excavation, the activity met permitted-activity thresholds.

The RAAG discussed the distinction between disturbing the underlying soil and adding material on top of it. Aeration of the runway had been permissible because the volume of disturbance fell within the limits allowed per square metre. The taxiway works had also complied because they involved building up the surface rather than excavating.

IM questioned whether additional layers of soil could be added to improve the runway's stony areas. OS noted that, while this was technically possible, the required volume would be significant and costly. He suggested that the current work should first be monitored to assess performance. If the renovated areas hardened sufficiently, this would inform future decisions. Once the necessary consents were obtained, options could include excavating stony sections, installing geotextile cloth to prevent stones from migrating upward, and then importing clean topsoil to rebuild the surface.

The RAAG noted the need to include potential patch-repair works in upcoming funding submissions to the Council. It was agreed that the funding request to renovate the northern section of the runway would incorporate consideration of these options once performance data from the current works were available.

SN expressed appreciation for the work undertaken during OS's absence, noting the significant period of roading and grass-establishment activity that had been managed. The RAAG acknowledged the effort involved.

The ownership of surplus road cones was discussed. DR confirmed that the cones belonged to the Council. Some would be returned to the Council's Water Unit, but a substantial number would remain available for airfield use. IM noted that having an on-site supply would be beneficial for events such as the Open Day, reducing reliance on donated equipment. Members were reminded that the cones were no longer compliant for road use but were suitable for airfield purposes.

NEXT MEETING

The next Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group meeting was scheduled for 5.30 pm, on Wednesday, 27 May 2026.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7.10 PM.

CONFIRMED

Chairperson

Date

Unconfirmed