

MINUTES OF THE RANGIORA AIRFIELD ADVISORY GROUP HELD AT 5.30 PM ON WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026, IN THE CANTERBURY AERO CLUB ROOMS AT THE RANGIORA AIRFIELD, MERTON ROAD, FERNSIDE

PRESENT

Steve Noad (SN) [Chairperson]

Bruce Drake (BD)

Rob Kittow (RK)

Owen Stewart (OS) [Waimakariri District Council]

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Duncan Roxborough (DR) [Waimakariri District Council]

Thea Künkel (KB) [Waimakariri District Council]

1. WELCOME

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

2. APOLOGIES

Buzz Harvey, Keith Vallance, and Philip Redmond (PR) [Deputy Mayor]

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group – 22 April 2025

Moved: S Noad

Seconded: O Stewart

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 22 April 2025.

CARRIED

4. MATTERS ARISING (From Minutes)

OS raised the following matter arising from the previous minutes:

4.1 Cables across Ashley River

OS confirmed that the small devices attached to the new 66 kV cables across the Ashley/Rakahuri River were bird diverters intended to increase wire visibility for birds and protect local species.

RK observed that flying below 500 feet in that area was illegal, as this was well above the height of the hiding panels. He further noted that a pilot cannot land on the river without permission and that it is at the pilot's discretion whether a particular area was safe to land.

4.2 Hangar development at the west end

OS advised that the hangar development at the west end of the airfield (Lots 95–98) was proceeding, and the general area had been marked out.

4.3 91/95 fuel Installation Update

OS reported that feedback had been received from Allied, who had been reviewing the matter. Their position had shifted from a possibility of supplying a fuel tank to requiring the Council to fund it. The estimated cost was around \$135,000 plus GST for a 10,000-litre tank, excluding gauging, seismic restraints, or a concrete pad.

SN noted that the two existing fuel installations at the airfield were non-compliant. OS explained that the Council had deferred making any decision regarding the current fuel installations until the potential opportunity with Allied had been fully explored. He noted that the Council was unlikely to proceed with the 91/95 fuel installation as the total cost was expected to be in the vicinity of \$200,000 once fully installed and operational.

SN questioned the role of fuel resellers, and it was acknowledged that their involvement could address some of the identified issues.

RK observed that the airfield users may be willing to fund the 91/95 fuel installation. It was suggested that OS discuss the matter with the Canterbury Recreational Aircraft Club (CRAC)

SN agreed and noted that Ryan Humphrey, who appeared to be leading the project, was currently in Australia evaluating a card-based fuel system that would allow club members to purchase fuel. At the same time, transient users would be unable to do so unless fuel was obtained through a club member's card. He recalled that in previous years there had been discussion of reseller licensing, and concerns had been raised.

OS concurred that the next step was for CRAC to review the full cost implications and determine whether they were prepared to meet those costs. If not, the Council would need to revert to the original approach, which involved ensuring compliance with the Waimakariri District Plan requirements, including the installation of a funded concrete pad for refuelling.

4.4 Security Fence and Gate Design

OS noted that no progress had been made on the design. However, he had received feedback from other councils operating small South Island airports, all of whom were experiencing similar issues. Reference was made to relevant case law regarding what constituted a secure gate at a non-security-designated airfield. OS explained that, provided the gate was in good condition, the latch or lock was serviceable, and appropriate signage stating '*No unauthorised access*' was displayed, the gate did not need to be locked. This level of security was considered sufficient to meet the Council's Chief Executive's obligations, as it demonstrated that the required security measures had been maintained and that unauthorised access was clearly prohibited.

OS noted that this approach would avoid access difficulties for users such as CRAC, while still ensuring that members of the public were authorised to enter the facility for legitimate purposes, such as flight training. He confirmed that any functional latch would be acceptable, provided it remained secure and did not fall off or blow open. A padlock was not required.

DR remarked that other councils continued to lock their vehicle gates to prevent unauthorised vehicle access, and that this practice would continue at the Rangiora Airfield. It was agreed that no report to Council was required at this stage."

RK observed that he had recently visited Napier Airfield, a Part 139-certified aerodrome. The airfield had an 11-wire plain-wire fence with approximately five battens per span, located immediately adjacent to the terminal. The fencing on the far side of the aerodrome appeared to be of an even lower standard. He had photographs showing that the fencing extended from the terminal area through to the top-dressing operations. Access gates at that aerodrome were similar to those used at the Rangiora Airfield.

RK commented that this type of fencing was consistent with standard 1200-millimetre plain-wire fencing with battens, similar to that previously used at the Rangiora Airfield. Examples from other certified aerodromes, including Timaru and Pukaki, were referenced, with the observation that many certified aerodromes across New Zealand did not appear to comply with the relevant rules if interpreted strictly. He suggested there did not appear to be a strong compliance focus by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on perimeter fencing at certified aerodromes.

OS noted that the Council was required to install a fence of some description around the Rangiora Airfield. The Council would need to determine the appropriate type of fence material, with the expectation that it would be 1200 mm. It was agreed that pedestrian gates would not be locked, while the main vehicle gates would remain locked.

4.5 Reopening of Taxiway

OS advised that CJ had strongly objected to the proposed reopening of the taxiway.

SN noted that we also received feedback from CJ the previous evening, during which he expressed significant dissatisfaction. It was advised that his concerns would be conveyed to the RAAG. SN questioned whether the primary issue was being addressed, specifically whether Tie-Upp was in the right location.

OS observed that the issue extended beyond TieUpp's location. Concerns were raised regarding aircraft wings protruding over the road when aircraft were taxiing. A bottleneck at the far end of the taxiway was also identified. Discussions had been held with the operator of the black hangar, Darren Davidson, who advised that manoeuvring aircraft around the bend was difficult, particularly with tail-dragger aircraft.

OS advised that the matter was broader than the earlier concerns raised by neighbouring hangar owners, although resolving those issues would help reduce tensions. CJ had expressed concern that the proposed changes would prevent him from parking his aircraft, or others' aircraft, in front of his hangar. It was noted, however, that the lease conditions already prohibited blocking common-use areas and that parking in that location had only been possible because existing posts prevented aircraft from taxiing through the area. Bruce Duff also raised concerns that reversing a truck from his hangar could result in a collision with an aircraft. It was suggested that this risk could be managed by having a person positioned outside to check for approaching aircraft before any vehicle was moved.

OS acknowledged the disappointment among some hangar owners; however, he noted that the issues raised appeared surmountable and could be addressed through process changes or a clearer understanding of lease obligations. He reiterated that lease conditions did not permit aircraft belonging to the lessee or others to be parked in front of hangars if these obstructed common-use areas.

DR recalled that at the previous meeting, the RAAG had reached a consensus to proceed with the reinstatement of the taxiway. Although some members had been absent, the group had agreed that the alternative fencing arrangement would be significantly more restrictive. The RAAG had confirmed its preference to reinstate the taxiway and had clarified that the intention was not to consult with the affected hangar owners, but rather to inform them of the decision.

SN noted that he had some reservations, noting that the earlier recommendation had been strongly supported by two microlight operators who did not regularly use that part of the airfield and may not have fully considered the broader operational context. He was concerned that their perspective might not have reflected the wider picture."

DR noted that there had been considerable discussion at the previous RAAG meeting. Concerns had been raised regarding the width of the taxiway and whether sufficient space existed for aircraft to pass the front of hangars. He reiterated that the understanding at that time had been to proceed with the reinstatement of the taxiway while informing the affected hangar owners.

BD observed that further criticism was likely. He therefore encouraged DR to walk the area in question to assess the uneven ground surface, as concerns had been raised about the terrain's suitability for aircraft with small wheels. It was noted that the area was particularly rough and that some operators would hesitate to taxi their aircraft through it. BD noted the high cost of aircraft propellers, with five-blade propellers valued at approximately \$30,000 each. He emphasised that damage to such equipment was a real risk if aircraft were required to taxi over uneven ground.

OS reported that all hangar owners on the western side of the road had expressed support for reopening the taxiway. He noted that reopening the area would provide operational flexibility, allowing aircraft to exit in either direction if one side was temporarily obstructed. The intention was to find a middle ground, acknowledging that no party would achieve their preferred outcome in full, but that a workable solution could be reached through cooperation. The RAAG agreed that the objective was to establish an arrangement that was practical and functional for all users.

OS noted that the issues raised by CJ and B Duff were considered resolvable. CJ had expressed concern that student pilots might taxi an aircraft into another aircraft parked in front of a hangar; however, it was observed that such risks exist on any taxiway and that an element of operational awareness and common sense was required. B Duff had raised concerns regarding dust generation on the taxiway. OS advised that the Council had recently approved additional funding for taxiway improvements, and that the affected section could be upgraded as part of the works associated with installing the soak pit near B Duff's hangar. This work would include resurfacing the area and improving conditions for aircraft movements.

RK reiterated that responsibility for the safe movement of aircraft lay with the pilot, not with the Council. Pilots were required to give way to one another and operate with awareness of the taxiway's conditions and limitations. He observed that all operators were familiar with the constrained space and the established taxiway route, and that it was incumbent upon pilots to exercise appropriate caution when manoeuvring.

OS noted that the fencing works, taxiway remediation, and associated improvements could be coordinated and undertaken as a single project. The taxiway would not be reopened immediately, as issues such as dust generation and uneven ground conditions needed to be addressed first. It was proposed that the works be scheduled so that the fencing installation, taxiway improvements, and soak-pit construction occurred concurrently, ensuring the area was upgraded before reopening for use.

5. MAINTENANCE

5.1 Taxiway repair project update

OS reported that the reseeded area was progressing well, with the newly established grass now clearly visible. The recent watering programme had made a significant difference to the seed strike's success, especially after the ground began to crack during the dry period. Following discussions between staff, watering had been prioritised and undertaken accordingly. The GSL Turf Manager advised that watering could cease at the end of the week, as soil moisture levels were now sufficient and moisture had penetrated below root depth. It was noted that continued watering would lower soil temperatures, which could be potentially counterproductive. Additional watering had also been applied to the runway, particularly in areas where bare patches had been present. This had resulted in a good

strike of new grass. Further watering was planned for the following day, after which the area would be left to establish naturally.

Responding to a question from SN, OS confirmed that watering had been undertaken at the western end of the runway; however, the area remained extremely dry. He advised that three to four passes had been completed along the southern side of the runway, applying approximately 36,000 litres of water. It was acknowledged that this level of watering was not economically ideal; however, given the investment already made in reseeding, efforts were being taken to protect that investment and encourage establishment where possible. It was noted that a significant amount of seed had failed to germinate due to the prolonged dry conditions, with minimal rainfall over the preceding eight weeks.

5.2 Airfield road upgrades works update

OS and SN reported receiving positive feedback on the road upgrades.

5.3 Irrigation Investigations Update

DR reported that the matter was ongoing. There were still uncertainties regarding the cost of irrigation improvements, the scale of work achievable within a reasonable budget, and the availability of water. Although the groundwater zone was not fully allocated, obtaining an additional consent to increase the water take would be a lengthy and challenging process. As a result, it was confirmed that a large-scale irrigation system would not be installed at this stage.

DR advised that the incoming water supply line to the Rangiora Airfield had been designed with an increased pipe size, even though it had not yet been installed. This would increase the number of water units available under the restricted supply, enabling continued irrigation of critical areas, such as around the jet-fuel pumps and the Way2Go helicopter operations, without depleting storage tanks. In the interim, only targeted irrigation would be undertaken. Further feasibility work would continue, with the intention of preparing a proposal for consideration in the Council's next Long Term Plan for a larger-scale irrigation system.

5.4 Water and wastewater Project Update

The wastewater upgrade project was awaiting consent approval. DR advised that works were expected to commence around September 2026, with tendering to occur soon. Resource consent applications for the associated earthworks had also been submitted. When asked whether any issues were anticipated, particularly regarding potential contamination similar to that previously encountered at the Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) site, DR advised that no significant difficulties were expected. The requirements remained stringent, including spot-testing and adherence to the Site Management Plan, and all soil would remain on site. Accordingly, the consent process was expected to be straightforward. The planned works would run through the centre of the newly established grassed area.

In response to RK's question, OS confirmed that all services would be installed within a single trench. The trench would run along the eastern edge of the airfield near the road edge, then enter the airfield site and initially terminate at the corner before continuing along the designated route. From there, it would run along the side of the taxiway, through the central area, around the strip end for Runway 10, and then extend westward. The services to be installed included water, wastewater, and underground power.

OS noted that the underground power was required to operate the new, larger pumping stations that would replace the existing septic tanks. When asked about the status of the current underground power network, OS clarified that the new installation related solely to powering the pumping stations and did not affect the existing system. DR noted that, as part of the works, some rationalisation of the existing power supply infrastructure would also occur. There were currently multiple connection points and meters servicing Council-owned facilities, and these would be consolidated to improve efficiency. It was confirmed that this rationalisation would not affect any private hangars.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

SN reported that two recurring offenders had been observed entering through the main gate and driving down the centre of the taxiway at speeds well in excess of 20 km/h, without hazard lights activated. These individuals had been spoken to on several occasions. He sought clarification on whether the Council had the authority to prohibit such individuals from driving in the airside area if their unsafe behaviour continued.

SN questioned whether recurring offenders could be requested to return their access cards. OS doubted that it would make a difference, as they would still have access to the taxiway through other chained access points. He believed that it would be best to focus on education and engagement.

BD suggested that an amendment to the Safety Management Manual could be considered. OS, however, confirmed that the manual already contained provisions regarding vehicle speed on the airfield. DR observed that individuals exceeding the speed limit were, by definition, not complying with the Safety Management Manual, which was a condition of airfield use. Non-compliance, therefore, constituted a breach of the requirements for operating in the airside area.

BD noted that several individuals had been observed operating quad bikes or motorbikes on the airfield without wearing helmets. OS reported that advice had been sought from the Council's Health and Safety specialists regarding the use of quad bikes and motorbikes on the airfield without helmets. Staff were awaiting clarification on whether requirements similar to farm-safety regulations, such as mandatory helmet use for riders, could be applied or referenced within the airfield's safety framework.

7. AIRFIELD INCIDENTS

OS reported that during a routine inspection, an incident involving circuit traffic was observed. An aircraft reported at eight nautical miles north of the Rangiora Airfield while three other aircraft were already established in the circuit. The next transmission from that aircraft was a call on short final, despite another aircraft having just turned base and a further aircraft being mid-downwind. As a result, the circuit sequencing had to be altered. The aircraft on base was unable to visually identify the inbound aircraft. The student pilot on final approach landed and continued rolling while the inbound aircraft entered the circuit too close behind her. Instead of conducting a go-around, the inbound pilot elected to land on the closed side of the runway while the student aircraft was still on the active runway.

SN noted that this was considered a serious lapse in airmanship and a breach of aviation rules, including failure to give way to established circuit traffic. OS agreed and noted that an Aviation-related Safety Concern was subsequently filed, with all video footage and radio recordings submitted to the CAA for investigation of the incident.

In addition, OS confirmed that he filed an Aviation-related Safety Concern with the CAA regarding the two aircraft that had landed and taken off on the closed portion of runway 07/25.

8. NOISE COMPLAINTS

No noise complaints were received in May 2026.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Feedback from Council meeting regarding the Rangiora Airfield Governance Structure

OS advised that the matter would be discussed at the Council meeting on 2 June 2026.

9.2 Camera installation at western fence line looking down 07/25 centreline

OS explained that a quotation had been obtained for additional signage and monitoring equipment at the western fence line looking down 07/25 centreline. This was being pursued due to the increasing number of pilots landing on the closed sections of the runway. Aircraft registrations and photographic evidence would be collected and forwarded to the CAA, as repeated non-compliance was becoming unacceptable.

OS advised that airfield users appeared to ignore the NOTAM, which clearly defined the runway closure area. It was further noted that, despite the displaced threshold in place, approximately eleven aircraft had taken off from the western end of the runway in contravention of the NOTAM, which stated that aircraft must not take off west of the displaced-threshold markers and must not continue landing beyond those markers.

OS observed that the ongoing non-compliance with the runway closure had become increasingly frustrating. Hence, a quotation was obtained for the installation of a remote, battery-powered camera with a solar charging panel and a hardened casing to protect it from damage. He expressed disappointment that such measures were necessary; however, it was hoped that enforcement action might help shift collective behaviour. OS commented that the centre of the runway was beginning to show significant wear due to continued landings on the closed portion, despite clear NOTAMs and ground-surface signage.

9.3 Councillor query regarding ratepayer subsidy for airfield

DR reported that Councillor Cairns raised a question at the previous Council meeting regarding the level of ratepayer subsidy, additional project costs, and the potential impact on rates. Following that discussion, staff had submitted a request through the 2026/27 Annual Plan process seeking several budget adjustments for the upcoming financial year. The requested items included:

- funding to continue grassing the northern side of the runway.
- funding allocation for new fencing.
- additional operational budget to support ongoing work with Daniel Smith on development matters. This work would involve preparing land-swap arrangements, transaction agreements, access agreements, and developer agreements, all of which would require staff time and legal input.
- additional budget to allow for the potential appointment of an independent Chairperson, to be used only if required."

Council approved all the abovementioned budget adjustments for the 2026/27 financial year. The overall rates increase for the coming year was projected to be approximately 4.79%; of that, the airfield-related budget requests represented approximately 0.04%.

RK noted past discussions about the acceptable level of ratepayer contribution to the Rangiora Airfield. It was noted that this issue had been raised previously, including reference to earlier financial modelling that suggested a 60/40 split, with approximately 60% funded by ratepayers and 40% recovered through airfield revenue. This had prompted ongoing questions about what an appropriate and sustainable funding balance should be.

DR advised that, at present, approximately 70% of airfield costs were subsidised by ratepayers, with the remaining 30% recovered through landing fees and lease charges. Determining what the long-term ratio should be remained a key strategic question. A fees and charges review had commenced in September 2025, and initial workshops had been held with the Council. However, the Council had determined that it was not yet ready to progress the discussion, and the review had been deferred. As a result, the existing fee structure would remain in place, aside from standard Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustments. DR also noted that funding had been approved for a strategic review to be undertaken in the coming year. This review would examine the airfield's future direction, including ownership arrangements and the long-standing debate over whether it should be funded primarily by users or by the Council.

9.4 Progress on the Rangiora Airfield Safety Management Manual

OS advised that the updated 2026 version of the Rangiora Airfield Safety Management Manual would be finalised soon. It was anticipated that the updated 2026 Manual and embedded Safety Policy Statement would be submitted to the Council's Community and Recreation Committee for approval on 16 June 2026.

SN asked whether future amendments to the document would be straightforward or require a full review cycle, similar to the current three-year process.

OS explained that the amendment process was outlined within the manual itself. Under the current structure, the Airfield Manager was responsible for drafting amendments, with approval provided by the Council's General Manager, Community and Recreation. This process enabled efficient updates, with revised versions issued electronically rather than requiring physical page replacements.

SN questioned whether the Safety Management System (SMS) should be incorporated into the Safety Plan or Operational Plan. OS clarified that the airfield operated with two separate manuals: the Safety Management Manual, which covered general safety requirements, and the Operations Manual, which detailed airfield maintenance procedures and formed part of the exposition. Some organisations incorporated their SMS as a chapter within their Operations Manual; however, the current structure, maintaining two distinct manuals, had been adopted locally and was considered acceptable. It was also noted that the CAA provided flexibility in how these documents could be organised.

SN enquired how the updated Safety Management Manual would be distributed to all airfield users. He noted that, during the previous update, printed copies had been placed in every hangar; however, this approach was now considered too costly. OS believed that electronic distribution of the updated manual would be the most efficient approach. Staff already held the contact details for all leaseholders, enabling the manual or a link to the online version to be circulated directly. While it was acknowledged that not all users would necessarily read the document, it was agreed that the Council had an obligation to take reasonable steps to ensure it was made available.

OS noted that ongoing communication would remain important. As part of quarterly updates, specific sections of the Safety Management Manual could be highlighted to reinforce key requirements and maintain user awareness.

9.1 Ashley River stopbank upgrade and secondary stopbank proposal -Environment Canterbury

OS advised that no further information had been received from Environment Canterbury (ECan) regarding its position on stopbank improvements.

SN noted that the primary area of concern appeared to be the section where the bank dropped significantly, leaving only approximately 500 mm of height above the roadway.

OS recalled that ECan had previously discussed both strengthening the primary stopbank and potentially constructing a secondary one. ECan had indicated that five metres of working space on either side of the stopbank would be required for improvement works, which would have impacted the airfield road. As a result, ECan had proposed undertaking all necessary works on the northern/river side instead.

OS further noted that ECan had acknowledged the need to increase the resilience of the primary stopbank but had also highlighted the significant risk should it fail, given the estimated \$2.4 billion in assets located between Rangiora and Kaiapoi. This risk profile was understood to be influencing central government priorities.

NEXT MEETING

The next Rangiora Airfield Advisory Group meeting was scheduled for 5.30 pm, on Wednesday, 24 June 2026.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.28 PM.

CONFIRMED

Steve Noad

Chairperson

22 July 2026

Date