

Long-term Plan 2024–34



Respondent No. 169

Response ID 5664034

Date of contribution Apr 22 24 09:25:30 am

Personal information

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I'm providing a submission (choose one): as an individual

Do you want to speak to Council about your submission at our public hearings on 2 May? Yes

Are you happy for your name to be published with your feedback: My name can be published with my feedback

Submission

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about this LTP?

I was wishing to ensure that the importance of the Kapiti Airport to the district is reflected in the LTP.

While the airport has been significantly run down under recent ownership and its potential left unrealised, this does not reflect the potential of the airport, the space around it and the space as a whole and the importance of this facility to Kapiti.

Kapiti and the other Wellington cities have long served, at heart, as dormitory suburbs for Wellington City. This is changing and the airport is a unique and under used advantage that Kapiti possesses to sit alongside its other quality of life advantages of climate, better local body infrastructure and good road and rail links.

This is a large underused space of 130 Ha right in the centre of Kapiti. The district does not need to utilise this space for yet more housing. KCDC planning has ensured there is ample space for housing to meet demand without having to destroy this unique open space asset.

It is hard to be exactly sure about what a future low carbon economy and transport system will look like, but it is always wise to keep infrastructure options open where the opportunity will be lost forever by short term decisions, such as breaking up this open space for a housing development designed around late 20th century paradigms - car based commuter housing.

If future transport has a place for direct point to point electric regional aviation, then a Kapiti airport will be a significant gain for the Kapiti economy by ensuring links and bringing business to the airport environs

and the district as a whole. If not, in the future we will still have the option to use 130 Ha of open space for something valuable to the people of the late 21st century.

The airport only requires a little over half of the 130 Ha site for operations, including land for aviation businesses. The rest of the site can be developed for other purpose and these would better be aviation, technology and other businesses, as seen in other airport precincts around the world, and in NZ. Kapiti needs more good high paying jobs if it is to reach its potential as a good place to live in all measures. A developed airport and business hub will help spark this. With central Wellington imploding, the opportunities to attract business and jobs here over the next two decades are significant. Not just from Wellington, but new jobs.

Under a management whose objective is sustaining and developing an airport, today's operations would grow, income increase significantly and aviation businesses would migrate to Kapiti, ahead of any future vision being realised.

What should KCDC do?

Make sure the airport site and its future as a mixed use aviation and business hub is reflected as being very important and a policy in the LTP. With current intensive land use in Kapiti, it would be essentially impossible to duplicate the airport if it were lost and the seriousness of this mistake was recognised later.

Maintain the aviation and mixed use zoning. This is too important and unique a site to be swallowed up in housing, housing which can be placed in many other zones in Kapiti.

Support the original owners efforts to reacquire the airport land and develop it for the long term benefit of themselves AND Kapiti. This may require some short term KCDC support through the establishment of a project management office to help them make the transition to a commercial land owning and operating organisation. The LTP should reflect that KCDC wishes to have a say in the future of this land, on behalf of the community, and it that it will become involved in ways that allow it to have this influence now and ongoing, beyond just zoning.

Recognise that, like proven in Kaikoura or the East Cape, the airport is a valuable civil defence asset in the LTP, for the relief of either Kapiti or adjacent areas in the event of natural disaster. Make this a policy in the LTP.

Recognise the unique transport hub in Kapiti. The railway, with frequent and fast train services to the growing region of Palmerston North and environs, SH1 and airport are all within 3 km. Good space exists around them for businesses and this is a highly attractive area to live. Recognise this and reflect preserving this present and opportunity in the LTP.

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