

Before an Independent Hearings Panel of Wellington

City Council

In the matter of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the **Act**)

And

In the matter of hearing of submissions and further submissions on the Wellington City Proposed District Plan (**PDP**)

**Statement of Evidence of
Jo Lester for Wellington International Airport Limited**

Dated: 27 May 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and Experience

1.1 My name is Jo Lester. I am the Airport Planning Manager at Wellington International Airport Limited (**WIAL**) that owns and is responsible for Wellington International Airport (**Wellington Airport or Airport**).

1.2 I have appeared before the Independent Hearings Panel with respect to Hearing Streams 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Proposed District Plan. I have set out my qualifications, and principal role at Wellington Airport experience in my previous evidence. I do not repeat that here.

Code of Conduct

1.3 I am giving evidence based on my experience and position. I accept however, that because I am employed by WIAL, my evidence may not be considered entirely impartial or independent.

1.4 Subject to that point, and while this is not an Environment Court hearing, I have read and otherwise complied with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023.

2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

2.1 This statement of evidence relates to Hearing Stream 9 (Transport and Infrastructure). The purpose of my evidence is to provide context and background information to support Ms O'Sullivan's evidence. It outlines:

- Wellington Airport's history and statutory status
- The Airports land interests outside the Airport Zone
- How incompatible land uses can affect airport operations; and
- How the Airport manages its transport infrastructure.

3. BENEFITS OF THE AIRPORT TO WELLINGTON

3.1 Ms Raeburn's evidence in Hearing Stream 1 outlined the importance of Wellington Airport to the wellbeing of Wellington both socially and economically and also outlined the recent Master planning process. This evidence is attached as **Appendix A** for ease of reference.

3.2 Her evidence provides a snapshot of Wellington Airport's social and economic importance to the city, a further summary of which is set out below.

3.3 Wellington International Airport Limited (WIAL) is the owner and operator of the Wellington International Airport (Wellington Airport or the Airport) located in the suburb of Rongotai in Wellington. Wellington International Airport is an important existing strategic asset to Wellington City and surrounding regions. It provides an important national and international transport link for the local, regional and international community and has a major influence on the regional economy. The Airport is a fundamental part of the social and economic wellbeing of the community.

4. WIAL's HISTORY and STATUTORY STATUS

4.1 It may be helpful for the Panel to understand WIAL's statutory status under the RMA and how that came about.

4.2 Up to 1990, the Airport was operated under a joint venture agreement between the Crown and the City of Wellington.

4.3 WIAL came into existence through the Wellington Airport Act 1990 (**WAA**) which provided for the incorporation of an airport company and the vesting of airport assets and liabilities of the Crown and Wellington City Council (**WCC or Council**) in that company.

4.4 The WAA declared the company to be an airport company within the meaning, and for the purposes of the Airport Authorities Act 1966 (**AAA**). WIAL was subsequently incorporated in accordance with the WAA and AAA. In August 1998, the Crown sold its 66% shareholding to a group of investors, comprising New Zealand Airports Limited, a company now wholly owned by Infratil Limited. The other 34% shareholding in WIAL continues to be held by WCC.

4.5 As an Airport Authority, WIAL must operate or manage the Airport as a commercial undertaking (section 4(3) Airport Authorities Act¹).

4.6 WIAL is also a network utility operator under section 166(g) of the RMA as well as an approved requiring authority under the Resource Management (Approval of Wellington International Airport Limited as Requiring Authority) Order 1992. This provides a general approval for the operation, maintenance, expansion and development of the Airport known as the Wellington International Airport. This enables WIAL to designate land as a requiring authority pursuant to section 167 of the RMA.

5. AIRPORT OWNED OR LEASED LAND AROUND AIRPORT

5.1 Despite WIAL's main operating area and future development areas being designated, these designations and the Airport zone itself do not cover all of the land that the Airport owns, leases or manages. Given the nature of Wellington Airport's operations as well as its constrained size, WIAL inevitably must look at land use and purchase beyond the Airport's current boundaries which are not within the Designations or Airport zone.

5.2 For example, on the Western side of the Airport, there are a number of (previously residential) properties on the western side of Bridge Street that have been removed from residential use under the Quieter Homes Programme (outlined in my Hearing Stream 5 (noise chapter) evidence). Some of these properties are currently being utilised as a community garden and composting hub.

5.3 WIAL also owns the site of the old aircraft control tower on Tirangi Road. This was purchased from Airways NZ when it was no longer required by them, and the control tower was removed from the site (because it penetrated the Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) and the building was at the end of its life). This property is within the Medium Density Residential zone.

¹ I note the AAA has been replaced by the Civil Aviation Act 2023, but which does not come into effect until April 2025 and the AAA will continue to apply until Airports register under the new Act which is not required until April 2030.

- 5.4** On the Eastern side of the Airport, WIAL own a number of residential rental properties along Moa Point Road, Calabar Rd and Miro Street. These too are zoned for Medium Density Residential purposes.
- 5.5** There are also a few airport related assets that are owned and operated by third parties located on land that is not zoned for airport purposes. These include meteorological equipment (such as the windsock) located within the Natural Open Space Zone between Lyall Bay and Moa Point, and navigational aids and beacons located on the some of the hilltops and ridgelines in the vicinity of the Airport (ie at Palmer Head, Wrights Hill and Melrose). The Airport also has three noise monitors located in Maupuia (Akaroa Drive), Strathmore Park (Kekerenga St) and at Rongotai College.
- 5.6** Finally, and as has been discussed previously WIAL maintains the seawalls located within the Natural Open Space Zone between Lyall Bay and Moa Point on land owned by the Council.

6. EFFECTS FROM OTHER POTENTIALLY INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES

- 6.1** The Airport's key role is to ensure that aircraft can operate safely when landing or departing the airport and it has other statutory obligations under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and the Civil Aviation Act 1990 (and the Civil Aviation Rules made under that Act) which relate to security and safety and the surrounding physical environment.
- 6.2** As we are all aware, Wellington Airport is situated within an existing urban environment. It is surrounded by residential, recreational, educational, industrial and other mixed-use activities, the coast and main transport corridors. Many of the activities that are undertaken in these areas can potentially affect airport operations, including from other infrastructure providers.
- 6.3** The encroachment of incompatible land uses or activities around the Airport may limit the safe and efficient aircraft operations and pose challenges for airport capacity expansion and other necessary development.
- 6.4** By way of examples, WIAL has recently been involved in the resource consent and notice of requirement processes with respect to the WCC's Sludge Minimisation

Project at the Moa Point wastewater treatment plant, and the extension to the Southern Landfill as well as the redevelopment of the northern half of the Miramar Golf Course, to ensure that their proposals (design/construction and operation) take into consideration their potential effects on airport activities including aircraft operations.

6.5 Quite apart from noise-sensitive activities within air noise overlays (which are dealt with in the Noise Chapter of the District Plan), and airspace obstructions (which are addressed by WIAL's Obstacle Limitation Surface designation that is the subject of the next PDP next Hearing Stream (10)), there are other potential adverse effects on the Airport that can arise as a result of incompatible activities being established in the airport environs. These include:

- Activities that create visual distractions for pilots and air traffic controllers; and
- Land uses that attract birds and other hazardous wildlife to the airport.
- Land conditions that can cause or harbour vector.²
- Activities that create security risk.

Visual distractions for Pilots or Air Traffic Controllers

6.6 Nearby construction activities can produce dust or other particulate matter that can impact pilot visibility. Dust can create a dangerous situation for pilots trying to navigate through the air without instrumentation. Nearby large-scale projects where the Airport has had to engage with the relevant developers and contractors to ensure that dust is controlled include the currently under construction Sludge Minimisation Facility to the southwest of the Airport site, and also the redevelopment of the northern part of the Miramar Golf Course.

6.7 Some industrial type activities with smoke/exhaust stacks can cause smoke plumes which can hinder a pilot's ability to navigate aircraft due to reduced visibility. The Airport has had to work closely with the Sludge Minimisation Project team to ensure that the emergency flare/methane burn out was within the discharge efflux velocities outlined in CAA Rule Part 77.7 (below 4.3 m per second).

² A biting insect or tick that transmits disease or parasite from one animal plant to another.

- 6.8** Any activities with lights in linear patterns or in colours that mimic aeronautical ground lighting that could be mistaken by pilots for airport operational areas or other lights causing visual impairments for pilots as they pass between darkness and well-lit areas are problematic.
- 6.9** For example, in 2018 when the New Zealand Transport Agency (**NZTA**) upgraded the streetlights along Cobham Drive immediately to the north of the Airport runway, WIAL, along with Airways NZ had to request that NZTA fit hoods to the lights so as not to distract pilots coming in to land or confuse air traffic controllers from being able to see the aircraft coming in to land or taxiing on the aerodrome.
- 6.10** Other potentially problematic activities that use lighting which can distract pilots include digital billboards within the vicinity of the runway, firework displays, lasers or light shows at the Stadium. A recent proposal by a well-meaning community/business group to build a large, lit up rata sculpture on the piece of land below the Wellington Blown Away sign was halted due to the potential visibility effects on aircraft operations.
- 6.11** Glare from large buildings, large signage etc can also potentially affect the visibility of pilots, and the air traffic control tower. Wellington Airport has been working with the Sludge Minimisation Facility design team to ensure that the cladding materials on that development will not cause undue glare.
- 6.12** An example where the Airport had issues with interference with the Instrument Landing System was when a bus depot established in the industrial area to the northwest of the airport, and many of the buses were being parked along Bridge Street, in Rongotai, parallel to the runway. The movement of these long buses had the potential to interfere with the radio signals of the Instrument Landing System.

Land uses and activities that attract birds and/or vector

- 6.13** Wildlife hazards can have serious consequences for airport operations. Wildlife activity is hazardous to aircraft operations. Deterring wildlife from the airport is critical in managing this hazard.
- 6.14** A recent example of where the presence of birds on a runway became an issue at an NZ Airport was earlier this year, when Timaru Airport experienced a near miss

with a flock of black-backed gulls, leading to the aircraft overshooting the runway, flight cancellations and the airport's temporary closure. Fortunately, there were no injuries or damage to the plane resulting from the aborted take-off.

6.15 Although most incidents are benign, Wellington has had its own disruptions caused by wildlife. In October 2022, a departing A320 ingested a black-backed gull into one of its engines shortly after take-off. Some of the fan blades of the engine were warped and damaged during the incident, causing the pilots of the aircraft to elect to return to Wellington. Upon the finding of the damage, the aircraft was removed from service while repairs took place, causing disruptions.

6.16 Under Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Rule 139 (Aerodromes Certification, Operation and Use), Airports in New Zealand must have a wildlife management plan to address the hazards of wildlife on the runway.

6.17 Given the above, One of WIAL's major concerns relates to surrounding land uses and whether their activities could attract birds which can increase the bird strike hazard. The CAA produces guidance material regarding wildlife hazard management. The types of activities noted in that guidance that are considered a potential wildlife attractant include:

- Landfills;
- Sewerage treatment and disposal activities;
- Some agricultural activities (i.e. cultivation of land, feed lots and pig farms);
- Fish processing plants, abattoirs and freezing works;
- Wildlife refuges; and
- Artificial and natural wetlands.

6.18 The biggest concern in the Wellington Airport context is the black-backed gull, which is a major benefactor of human land-use techniques, and waste generation. This species is not only large but is also one of the most numerous species in the region. The Airport has its own onsite procedures to manage this species, but also works with landfill operators, local schools, and hospitality establishments to reduce the number of attractants to species such as seagulls from these sources

and provide educational material about the importance of not feeding birds and ensuring that proper waste disposal options are provided.

- 6.19** Minimising land uses and activities near airports that attract wildlife reduces the likelihood of bird strikes. There are typically three categories of attractants: food, shelter/cover, and water. Common attractants include architectural features where birds can perch or roost, landscaping (vegetation), landfills, wastewater treatment facilities, and wetlands/standing water.
- 6.20** Standing water is incompatible in the areas surrounding an international airport not only because it can attract birds, but it can also attract biological vectors i.e., mosquitoes. As outlined in my evidence for Hearing Stream 6 (paragraph 6.7), these are a public health/biosecurity risk (to our primary sector) under the International Health Regulations 2005 (which NZ is a signatory to). These regulations require that within a 400metre radius circle from international processing facilities that any mosquito/larval habitats (i.e. areas of standing water) are removed/eliminated.
- 6.21** Wellington Airport has five designated international points of entry (the 400 m radius around these are shown in **Figure 1** below). This includes areas of land beyond the airport boundaries (i.e. over the Miramar Golf Course, the wastewater treatment plant and currently being constructed sludge minimisation facility, much of the mixed-use zone in Rongotai plus Rongotai College and surrounding residential areas).



Figure 1: Vector Control Areas – Wellington Ports of Entry

6.22 With respect to WCC’s Sludge Minimisation Project and the redevelopment of the northern part of the Miramar Golf Course, WIAL worked with the relevant parties to ensure that any stormwater treatment did not include standing water, and that any proposed landscaping did not include trees/ landscaping that are attractive to birds (or would penetrate the Obstacle Limitation Surface).

Activities that create security risk

6.23 Under CAA Rule Part 19.355, no object/vehicle is allowed be located adjacent to an Airports security fence (to prevent unauthorised access to the airfield). When establishing its’ bus depot on Carins Street, in Rongotai (as mentioned in para.6.12 above), Transit also installed a large above ground fuel storage tank in the vicinity of the fence which was initially planned to be immediately adjacent to the security fence, however when they were laying the concrete foundations for this, it was noticed by Airport staff, and they had to alter their plans to comply with this Civil Aviation Rule.

7. AIRPORT TRAFFIC GENERATION AND MANAGEMENT

7.1 The transport network surrounding the Airport is managed by a number of transport authorities (Wellington City Council in relation to the local road network, NZTA Waka Kotahi in relation to the state highway network, and Greater Wellington in relation to public transport). The responsibility for the capacity and performance of the adjacent roading infrastructure falls with the road controlling authorities.

7.2 As the most significant generator of growth in the eastern suburbs, WIAL actively engages with these road controlling authorities to inform future needs to support the Airport.

7.3 As a result of its traffic generation, the Airport's designations require WIAL to submit an Annual Parking Demand and Supply Report³. The first of these was submitted to WCC in August 2023, and is included as **Appendix B** to this evidence. The 2024 report is currently being prepared for submission to WCC in August this year.

Advocating for improved transport.

7.4 WIAL is actively involved various transportation initiatives that promote and support access to the airport by means other than private car. This has included the 'Let's Get Wellington Moving ("LGWM")' a programme of works that would have provided a number of associated benefits to increase airport access and travel by non-car modes. While the LGWM is in the process of being wound up, it is anticipated there will be future central and local government initiatives that WIAL will also be actively involved in.

7.5 The Airport is also a keen supporter of Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) plans on the Airport route and have waited for many years for local and central government to finalise decisions. WIAL is ready to facilitate rapid public transport connections as soon as progress is made by decision makers.

³ Condition 37 of WIAL's Main Site Area Designation.

7.6 Electric Bus service and depot

7.7 By far the biggest impact on reducing private vehicle use to and from the airport will come from having regular, direct, rapid public transport connections to and from the CBD. The reinstatement of the 'Airport – City Centre' bus service (Airport Express) was implemented in July 2022, with subsequent passenger numbers (of approximately 32,000 a month) exceeding patronage forecasts. In accommodating the Airport Express services, WIAL has established an electric bus depot within the Miramar South Precinct (or Wellington Airport Miramar South Area Designation WIAL2), which includes bus charging stations as well as car parking and staff facilities for the bus drivers.

Supporting Active Transport

7.8 As a part of the Airports multi-level carparking building and transport hub there is a designated bike parking area. This area is located less than 2 minutes undercover walking distance from the main doors to the main terminal building. Recent improvements to the bike parking areas includes the installation of 'Locky Docks' in May 2023, to better and more safely accommodate cycles, including electric bikes, supporting the ongoing increase in numbers of cyclists accessing the precinct.

7.9 There is also a bike fix-it station with tools, bike pump and stand to hang your bike located adjacent to the area to assist with any bike assembly or repairs.

7.10 WIAL supports active transport to and from the Airport by:

- collecting data through surveys on how staff and passengers get to the airport.
- Monitoring the demand/use of existing bike parking facilities - more facilities will be provided as necessary.
- Safe cycle routes to and from the airport terminal is a key consideration in development of our wider site.
- Current projects relating to cycle improvements:
 - better signage/wayfinding for our existing bike facilities to guide cyclists to the bike assembly/disassembly area for passengers arriving by aircraft. This includes making an area where bike boxes can be left.

- Working with a sign provider to guide cyclists who are arriving at the airport by bike to the secure bike parking and bike assembly/ disassembly area.
- The cycle map from GWRC can be printed off and left in the area. We are just investigating how to secure these maps in the infrastructure.
- We plan to update [cycling information on our website](#) (including a video) to guide cyclists to this space.

7.11 There is also a wider project underway to improve cycle wayfinding and the safety of airport cycle routes in collaboration with Wellington City Council. Any civil works on council land is on hold with recent WCC budget cuts. But we are working with them to implement better signage on the existing cycling routes.

Improvements to Taxi, Shuttle & Rideshare Operations and Facilities

7.12 In addition to traditional taxis and shuttles, there is now dedicated provision for 2 Rideshare (app based i.e. Uber/ YourRide) and 2 Carshare (i.e. rental cars by the hour: Mevo and Cityhop) services provided at the terminal, which reflects the increasing popularity of these options, with rideshare now overtaking taxis in terms of total pick-up/drop-off trips at the airport. Uber have a new dedicated pick-up zone, conveniently located outside the main exit from the terminal building.

Technological advancements or partnerships utilised to address traffic challenges.

7.13 In addition to providing a convenient online booking system that affords airport customers the ability to pre-book parking spaces ahead of their arrival, based on their needs (i.e. duration and proximity to the terminal), smart parking systems at the precinct provide clear direction to guide drivers to available parking areas with spare capacity. These measures assist in ensuring an efficient customer experience and in turn help to optimise utilisation of the parking resource at the airport.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Given the matters discussed above it is important that the District Plan includes policy provisions that will assist in protecting the Airport from incompatible land

uses or activities establishing around the Airport as outlined in Ms O'Sullivan's evidence.

- 8.2** The Airport owns and/or manages land which includes infrastructure beyond the Airport Zone and beyond its Airport Purpose designations' boundaries and is therefore reliant on District Plan provisions in these areas.
- 8.3** Wellington Airport responsibly manages traffic generation to the best extent it practicably can and is actively involved in district, regional and national transportation initiatives that affect the Airport and its surrounds.

Dated 27 May 2024

Jo Lester

Planning Manager

**BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL OF
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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
JENNA RAEBURN
FOR WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED**

DATED: 16 February 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and Experience

1.1 My name is Jenna Raeburn.

1.2 I hold a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Arts.

1.3 I have been employed by Wellington International Airport (WIAL) since 2018. My current role is General Manager Corporate Affairs, responsible for planning, resource management and sustainability.

2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

2.1 In preparing for the hearing, I have read the following:

- (a) WIAL's filed submissions and further submissions on the PDP.

2.2 My evidence sets the scene for WIAL's submissions that will be heard over a number of the hearing streams and includes discussion on:

- (a) how WIAL's operation supports the wellbeing of the region both economically and socially;
- (b) our plans to meet future travel demand including our 2040 Masterplan;
- (c) our designations which enable efficient and ongoing development in recognition of the airport's role as Regionally Significant Infrastructure;
- (d) the importance of District Plan provisions that enable the airport to appropriately manage growth and recognise the potential for reverse sensitivity effects from noise sensitive activities;
- (e) the importance of WIAL's role as a lifeline utility operator; and
- (f) our sustainability plans, including net zero emissions by 2030 and helping decarbonise aviation.

2.3 WIAL will provide more detailed evidence at later hearings as is appropriate to the individual topic being heard.

3. WELLINGTON AIRPORT CONTEXT

Facilitator of Economic Growth and Wellbeing

- 3.1** Wellington Airport connects people and goods around New Zealand and the world, making a vital contribution to wellbeing. It is the primary arrival and departure port for many visitors to the region.
- 3.2** It fulfils a critical role as essential transport infrastructure for the city, region and country. In the most recent year (ended March 2022) 3.5 million travellers used the airport, but this is expected to reach pre-Covid levels of over 6 million by 2025.
- 3.3** Air travel is vital for Wellington's connectivity, given it is the capital city and geographically isolated from other main centres (Auckland at least eight hours drive and Christchurch separated by Cook Strait).
- 3.4** The resilience of Wellington's air travel market is a strong indicator of the necessity of air travel to the lives of Wellington residents and its visitors. Domestic traffic volumes at the airport have already materially recovered to their pre-Covid levels and connectivity to the trans-Tasman network has been restored. The pandemic has interrupted the growth profile of the airport, but WIAL's analysis, evidence of the recovery and industry expertise indicates that this impact is temporary.
- 3.5** Wellington Airport makes a very substantial contribution to the Wellington region's economy. An economic impact assessment (EIA) undertaken by Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) as part of the 2040 Master planning found that in 2018 the airport generated economic output of \$2.3 billion and close to 11,000 jobs in the local economy.¹ The economic wellbeing enabled by Wellington Airport includes inbound tourism, business connectivity, improved productivity, and increased competition.
- 3.6** Pre-Covid growth projections indicated this would double to \$4.3 billion per year by 2040 and facilitating more than 22,500 jobs.²

¹ Wellington Airport Annual Review, 2020.

² Wellington Airport 2040 Masterplan.

- 3.7** The ongoing operation and development of the Airport is therefore of significant importance to employment, growth and the economic wellbeing of the community.

Lifeline Utility Operator

- 3.8** The airport is recognised as a lifeline utility in the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002 (CDEM Act 2022) and is a member of the Wellington Lifelines Group (WeLG). In the event of a significant earthquake or other hazard event, the airport is recognised as potentially the only link between the city and the rest of the country given the vulnerability of the road and rail network and the potential for the port and harbour access to be affected by liquefaction.
- 3.9** The airport participates in national emergency exercises and is a key player in local civil defence planning with deep emergency response expertise and equipment enabling land and sea rescue activity in the Eastern suburbs, South Coast and Wellington Harbour.

Significant Infrastructure Provider

- 3.10** WIAL is an Airport Authority, and as such must be operated or managed as a commercial undertaking (Section 4(3) of the Airport Authorities Act).
- 3.11** As an Airport Authority, WIAL is responsible for planning the development of the airport to ensure that it can meet the needs of the population it serves. It is well known that Wellington Airport operates on a constrained site and WIAL continuously works to determine how best to provide for future airport requirements.³
- 3.12** The airport is an intergenerational asset. Some of the facilities required can take a matter of years to design, fund and build and they remain in place for 50 years or longer in many cases. In other cases, WIAL needs to be particularly agile in the way that it provides infrastructure, as aviation demands can change rapidly.
- 3.13** The function of the airport should be seen within the context of various city and regional plans that are currently under development or review. The Wellington Regional Growth Framework (July 2021) is being

³ Wellington Airport operates on just 110 hectares, compared to Auckland Airport on 1500 hectares and Christchurch Airport on 750 hectares.

developed to look at how the Wellington-Horowhenua region can cater for up to 250,000 more residents in 30 years' time; a 43% increase over current (June 2021) estimated population. Further, this Framework anticipates the generation of an additional 100,000 jobs over the same timeframe. Other plans, such as the Wellington City Economic Wellbeing Strategy are consistent with facilitating the growth of population and employment within the Wellington City area. Wellington Airport will need to change and expand to cater for the anticipated growth in population and employment and will be a key enabler to generate this growth.

- 3.14** Were the airport not able to cater for this growth in population, we expect airfares to and from Wellington would increase significantly with demand outstripping supply. This would result in a city and region comparatively expensive to travel to, reserving air travel for the privileged while creating large barriers for business and government.

Social and cultural wellbeing

- 3.15** Wellington Airport is an important contributor to social and cultural wellbeing. In addition to supporting the employment of tens of thousands of Wellingtonians, the Airport connects people with loved ones, events and cultures across the globe, and provides substantial support to the local and regional community.
- 3.16** Prior to Covid-19, Wellington Airport invested around \$2.5 million per annum in the community through sponsorships, the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards, and home acoustic mitigation. These programmes have been reduced during the pandemic but are being scaled back up as passenger numbers return to normal.
- 3.17** Key event sponsorships include World of Wearable Art, Wellington on a Plate and Beervana, CubaDupa, Wellington Fringe Festival, Te Papa exhibits and the New Zealand Festival of the Arts. The Airport also supports Wellington's art and culture, hospitality, sport and events through pop-up showcases of local artists and festivals, sponsored advertising, installations for exhibits, and by reflecting Wellington's film and creative industry and food and beverage offerings in the terminal.
- 3.18** The Airport supports a large number of charitable organisations through the Wellington Regional Community Awards, which are organised in

collaboration with the region's councils and recognise the work of volunteer groups in the areas of Arts and Culture, Education and Child/Youth Development, Health and Wellbeing, Heritage and Environment and Sport and Leisure. The Airport also sponsors Cystic Fibrosis New Zealand through its annual Christmas tree festival, supports the Life Flight Trust, and supports local community groups through donations and neighbourhood working bees.

- 3.19** As a result of the Airport designation proceedings through Environment Court mediation in 2022. The Airport agreed to establish a Community and Environment Fund for the benefit of the local community located near the airport (in particular within the 65 dB Air Noise Boundary and any new 60dB Ldn contour) for the purpose of education, promotion and advancement of community, and the mitigation of any adverse effects association with the operation of the airport and environmental interests⁴. WIAL is currently working with the mediation parties to set up the Trust to administer this fund.
- 3.20** The Airport's location close to the CBD is ideal for reducing travel time and land-based emissions, as well as supporting productivity and connectivity; however, Wellington Airport is conscious of its proximity to neighbours and its unusually constrained site. The Airport operates a Noise Management Committee comprised of resident representatives, airlines, air traffic control and other airport operators. This Committee oversees the management of noise at the Airport, and the Airport Noise Management Plan has recently been reviewed and submitted to WCC for certification.
- 3.21** WIAL also invests in noise mitigation (insulation and ventilation) for the existing homes nearest the airport. To date, this programme has spent more than \$10 million and supported 100 homeowners.
- 3.22** The Airport is unable to internalise the noise effects of aircraft operations within its land boundaries. Given that residential activity is a noise sensitive activity, it is not a compatible land use adjacent to an airport. Once such activities are established, noise complaints can have the potential to result in constraints on an airport's operation. Wellington

⁴ Condition 39 of the Main Site Area Designation (WIAL 4 in the WCC PDP and G5 in the Operative DP)

Airport is already subject to operational constraints through the imposition of a night-time curfew (and other noise conditions),

- 3.23** The most appropriate planning tool to manage and control the establishment of incompatible activities (such as intensified residential development) within the vicinity of existing airports is through District Plan provisions, which are recognised and provided for in the New Zealand Planning Standards as Noise Control Boundary Overlays. It is important that these noise control boundary overlays are considered as Qualifying Matters to ensure that the Council can make residential development less permissive than the limits set out in the National Policy Statement for Urban Development, so that more people are not exposed to aircraft noise and any adverse amenity effects related to this over time.
- 4.** It is also useful to note that the Noise Control Boundary Overlays in the PDP depict a point of compliance or a “maximum” level of aircraft noise that can be generated over time. It does not reflect the current level of aircraft noise that is generated at Wellington Airport.

THE WELLINGTON AIRPORT MASTERPLAN

- 4.1** WIAL, as the guardian of the Airport, is obliged to take a long-term approach and commit resources towards planning and protecting for the future of the Airport. Care must be taken to ensure decisions are carefully considered and trade-offs understood.
- 4.2** Master planning is an important component of this approach. Accordingly, WIAL updated its 2010 Masterplan (known as 2030 Masterplan) during 2019 (the update being known as the 2040 Masterplan). Wellington Airport recently obtained designations over its existing site, and proposed expansion site to the East, to enable the efficient and ongoing development of the Airport in line with the Masterplan, and these have now been confirmed in the District Plan.
- 4.3** These designations recognise the Airport’s status as Significant Regional Infrastructure, and underpin future development.
- 4.4** The 2040 Masterplan included an aviation forecast detailing:
- (a) the aircraft types and air routes currently operating,
 - (b) the anticipated growth in passenger demand,

- (c) the aircraft types expected to be utilised to meet that demand, and
- (d) the airport facilities required during peak times to accommodate the required aircraft movements over the planning period.

4.5 The forecasts, derived by leading industry forecasters Intervistas, with input from the carriers serving Wellington Airport, indicate that a gradual up-gauging of aircraft (airlines moving to larger aircraft) over the planning period should be provided for, specifically on high volume routes such as the route connecting Wellington with Auckland. This up-gauging is expected to result in widebody aircraft such as the Boeing 787 being required to service the main trunk domestic routes at peak times, 68 seat turbo-prop aircraft replacing 50 seat variants and so on. While Covid-19 has had a major impact since these forecasts were completed, Wellington Airport continues to expect growth in demand and up-gauging of aircraft going forward.

4.6 Accommodating larger aircraft types requires additional apron area for compliant aircraft parking and circulation. Wellington Airport has hosted scheduled services from widebody (Code E) aircraft in the past, but only at low frequency. The regular hosting of multiple Code E aircraft at peak times is a significant change in the way aircraft are managed on the ground at Wellington Airport. Aircraft such as the Boeing 787 and Airbus 350 are classified as Code E aircraft, requiring larger parking spaces, wider taxiway separation and larger ground handling equipment.

4.7 The extent of additional apron space now required was not anticipated in the earlier 2030 Masterplan when it was published in 2010; at the time, traffic volumes were expected to utilise a higher proportion of Code C aircraft. Hosting the types and volumes of aircraft now expected will also require additional terminal space. This is a good reminder of how airports need to be flexible and adaptable to changing technologies.

4.8 Similarly, the introduction of next-generation low- or zero-emission aircraft will require flexibility and adaptation. For example, electric aircraft may be smaller and more numerous (conversely to up-gauging of larger aircraft), which also requires apron expansion and changes to terminal layout. The 2040 Masterplan is a snapshot of the future, providing

guidance for airport growth, but any expansion will be staged in a way that takes account of developments as they occur.

4.9 Wellington Airport is currently reviewing its capital expenditure plans to determine the next steps for a new international terminal, expanded apron space, and seawall renewal (which is reaching the end of design life, and under-designed by today's standards, requiring frequent maintenance) and is mostly beyond the boundaries of the Airport's designation), among other major projects. The next five years of capital expenditure will be consulted on with airlines (as required by the Airport Authorities Act⁵) in 2023, and finalised in early 2024.

4.10 It is important to WIAL that District Plan provisions do not unnecessarily or inadvertently constrain the proper operation and development of the Airport and its seawall both now and in the future.

5. SUSTAINABILITY AND THE TRANSITION TO NET ZERO

Wellington Airport operational emissions

5.1 WIAL is strongly committed to playing our part in reducing emissions and improving our sustainability. We aim to reach net zero emissions for our own operations by 2030, involving substantial, permanent reductions and then offsetting remaining emissions. By 2050 we are aiming for absolute zero emissions (no carbon output at all).

5.2 Some of our milestones to achieving these goals include:

- (a) Achieving Level 2 Certification from the Airport Carbon Accreditation programme, which runs independent assessments of airports around the world. This recognises we have comprehensive emissions profile mapping and reductions in place.
- (b) Scoring highly against Environment, Social and Governance benchmarks (3rd in the world for participating airports) in an independent global assessment by GRESB.

⁵ Shortly to be replaced by the Civil Aviation Bill.

(c) Improving the energy efficiency of buildings and infrastructure.

(d) Progressively replacing our operational vehicle fleet with electric vehicles (with the exception of fire service vehicles), with a third completed so far.

5.3 Our next steps include replacing our gas boiler and further reducing operational emissions.

5.4 This progress so far and work underway should provide the panel with a very high degree of comfort that the ongoing provision of infrastructure at Wellington Airport is consistent with a net zero emissions future.

Airline emissions

5.5 While the transition of aircraft technology to lower emissions is out of our direct control, we are working hard to lead and support airlines in this vital work.

5.6 For example, we are leading a technical group with other New Zealand airports and airlines looking at the requirements to support electric flights, and we have partnered with electric aircraft manufacturer Heart Aerospace to support the development of their ES-30 aircraft. In November 2021 we hosted the first electric flight to cross Cook Strait.

5.7 We are also supporting the roll-out of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF), with a target of 2023-4 for the first SAF-powered commercial flights.

5.8 It is worth noting Air New Zealand's stated goal to reach net zero emissions in their operations by 2050, and of Sounds Air to be operating commercial electric flights before the end of the decade.

5.9 The Climate Change Commission recognises that aviation is essential to New Zealand's way of life and therefore provided for in all scenarios and pathways to meet New Zealand's 2030 and 2050 emissions targets.

5.10 Te Atakura – First to Zero (which is WCC's blueprint to make Wellington City a zero carbon capital (net zero emissions) by 2050) also identifies the critical role of the airport in a connected city. The WCC submission to the Climate Change Commission (aligned to the delivery of Te

Atakura) confirmed the importance of air travel for tourism, and our reliance on air travel to stay connected to each other.

- 5.11** The Commission has also recognised that technology advancement is expected to provide a range of meaningful solutions to reduce emissions from the aviation sector over the medium term. Along with the electrification of short-distance commercial flights and SAF, there has been further investment into more efficient next generation aircraft. This is a continuation of a long-term sector trend with aviation CO2 emissions today being 56% less per passenger kilometre than in 1990.
- 5.12** Given all of these industry-wide efforts, it is certain that aircraft technology will change over the next 20 years. This means that airports, including Wellington Airport, will need the flexibility to accommodate these changes.
- 5.13** It is important to Wellington’s economic and social wellbeing that a “net zero emissions future” is not perceived as a future where aviation growth is restricted. As noted above, domestic aviation has grown significantly since the 1990s with no substantial growth in emissions due to changing aircraft types and greater efficiency.
- 5.14** More air travel in and out of Wellington could reduce global emissions, if direct flights replaced more indirect routes. For example, a direct connection from Wellington to South-east Asia or North America would remove the need for a connection through Auckland, reducing journey time and the significant fuel burn during take-off and landing procedures.
- 5.15** Simply limiting aviation would likely result in inequitably high prices for airfares. The better pathway to net zero emissions is to support the development of new technology and allow reasonable time for this to occur.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1** Wellington Airport is essential for the wellbeing of the region both economically and socially.
- 6.2** The Airport is a key emergency response facility and is recognised as Regionally Significant Infrastructure.

- 6.3** WIAL has undertaken extensive Master Planning exercises over many years so that it is in a position operationally to meet future travel demand in a way that appropriately mitigates effects on the surrounding environment.
- 6.4** Designations are now in place which enable the operation and expansion of the Airport, but resource consents will inevitably be required for activities beyond the boundaries of its designations or with respect to any non-airport activity.
- 6.5** Wellington Airport should be protected from incompatible land uses such as increased residential density in close proximity to the Airport.
- 6.6** WIAL is actively involved in reducing its operational emissions and improving its sustainability, including reaching net zero emissions by 2030 and supporting decarbonisation of the wider aviation sector.

Dated 16 February 2023

Jenna Raeburn

GM. Corporate Affairs



30 August 2023

Wellington City Council
PO Box 2199
Wellington

Attention: Soon Kong and Dennis Davis (via email)

Kia ora,

WELLINGTON AIRPORT DESIGNATION – ANNUAL REPORT – CARPARKING (SR 455891)

Wellington International Airport Limited's ("WIAL") 'Main Site Area' ("MSA") designation (G5 in the WCC Operative District Plan and WIAL 4 in the WCC Proposed District Plan) includes a condition that requires an annual report on carparking across the Airport precinct, as follows:

Condition 37

On an annual basis, the Requiring Authority shall submit to the Council a report describing the current status of Airport car parking demand and supply. The report shall include a description of traffic management and car parking within the Airport environs, any temporary carparking that has been made available within the designated land to facilitate construction activities, and an overview of any planned changes or improvements in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisioning for car parking within the Airport. Consideration of the efficiency and effectiveness of car parking shall include identification of actions or strategies the Requiring Authority could practicably implement to reduce airport related car parking effects occurring beyond the Requiring Authority's designation.

This report has been prepared to summarise the relevant parking supply, demand and management information to Wellington City Council (WCC" or the Council""), and is structured to:

1. describe the current parking supply and utilisation at the Airport;
2. give details of temporary parking provided to facilitate parking displaced by construction activities;
3. identify programmed initiatives aimed at improving efficiency of the precinct parking; and
4. detail key strategies that could mitigate impacts of Airport parking beyond the precinct.

1. CURRENT AIRPORT PARKING

Parking Supply

Wellington International Airport Limited: Carparking Summary Report

The current airport parking provision that serves customers and staff is summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Airport Parking Supply

Type	Provision	No. Spaces
Public	Long Term Parking (shuttle bus to the terminal)	790
	Uncovered	935 (incl 80 x P120)
	Covered (8-storey parking building)	814 (excl 134 staff parks)
	Premium	115
	Valet	166
Total		2,820
Staff	Station Road carpark	220
	Level 8 (of the 8-storey parking building)	134
	Staff carpark to the north of the terminal	100
	Staff carpark to the south of the terminal	175
	Air NZ staff carpark	250
	Contractor parking	34
Total		913

As shown, the airport currently provides a total of 2,820 car parks for the public, along with 913 staff parks.

Traffic Management

WIAL is equipped with entry and exit barriers to control and monitor vehicle movements. Eight well-marked north entry lanes allow multiple vehicles to access the airport premises simultaneously, minimising congestion at the entrance. Each entry lane has clear signage indicating whether it is intended for short-term parking, long-term parking, or other specific parking products. WIAL has a 10-minute free grace period to facilitate pick-ups and drop-offs, accompanied by eight well-marked north exit lanes helps minimises congestion both inside and outside the airport environment.

Whilst in the carpark, the airport employs a one-way circular traffic flow to guide vehicles through the parking areas smoothly and efficiently. This circular route helps prevent collisions and reduces confusion, as all vehicles follow the same path and exit at designated points. A parking guidance system on Level 1 and within the Covered parking building also enhances wayfinding and reduces confusion by helping drivers locate available parks quickly.

To physically monitor traffic on the ground, WIAL has contracted Wilson Parking to manage carparking, forecourt and valet management services on a 24-hour 7 day a week basis. The contract ensures proper utilisation of parking spaces through staff directing traffic and assisting passenger queries, so traffic flows remain appropriate.

Wellington International Airport Limited: Carparking Summary Report

Parking Utilisation

Utilisation data provided by WIAL summarised in **Table 2** below shows that the current 'public' parking occupancy or 'demand' (including Valet parks¹) across the airport between the period April 2022 to March 2023. The parking demand data provided highlighted both the 'average' (i.e. the number of vehicles parked each hour, averaged across a full day) and the 'peak' (i.e. the daily peak hour occupancy).

Table 2: Parking Utilisation Summary

Description	Metric	
Average Occupancy	59%	
Peak Occupancy	Days Exceeding 75%	144
	Days Exceeding 85%	42
	Days Exceeding 95%	5

The existing public parking resource across the precinct is generally operating well within capacity, with utilisation averaging around 59% and peaking at around 85% through the busier months of October and November 2022. It is noted that a spike in parking demand was experienced in July of 2022, where 'peak' occupancy exceeded 95% for 5 days. This peak coincided with exceptional demands for the first school holiday period after Covid-19 restrictions were fully lifted.

Overall, and with the exception of the post-Covid travel surge last year, the current airport parking supply is operating well within capacity. Continued ongoing monitoring will track utilisation trends going forward, as both demand and supply for airport parking adjusts over time.

2. TEMPORARY AIRPORT PARKING AREAS

With the construction of a temporary ground services engineering facility near the south end of the precinct, there has been some reduction in the rental car park overflow (approximately 70 spaces). In addition, as part of the Council's Moa Point 'Sludge Minimisation Facility' works, the removal of the nearby hillock (between Freight Drive and Stewart Duff Drive) has required the removal of adjacent hardstand accommodating around 140 rental car parking spaces.

The completion of the new overflow facility on the southern part of the old Miramar school site (Miramar South Area Designation²) off Broadway / Kauri Street has allowed for the relocation of those parking areas

¹ Including Valet parking but given the nature of these vehicles being 'jockeyed' around within the precinct for drop-off, optional grooming, longer term storage, and back to the terminal pick-up, capacity is greater than physical spaces recorded.

² G4 in the WCC operative District Plan and WIAL 2 in the WCC Proposed District Plan

Wellington International Airport Limited: Carparking Summary Report

described above, on a temporary basis until such time as the new rental car facility is completed on land at the northern end of the Miramar South Area, which is programmed for the next few years.

3. INITIATIVES AIMED AT IMPROVING PARKING EFFICIENCY

In addition to providing a convenient online booking system that affords airport customers the ability to pre-book parking spaces ahead of their arrival, based on their needs (i.e. duration and proximity to the terminal), smart parking systems at the precinct provide clear direction to guide drivers to available parking areas with spare capacity. These measures assist in ensuring an efficient customer experience and in turn help to optimise utilisation of the parking resource at the airport.

Whilst the above measures focus on facilitating delivery of an effective parking option for customers at the airport, a range of alternative travel modes other than private car are available for passengers and staff to access the precinct, as described in turn below.

Airport Express Bus

The reinstatement of the 'Airport – City Centre' bus service (Airport Express) was implemented in July 2022, with subsequent passenger numbers (of approximately 30,000 a month) exceeding patronage forecasts. In accommodating the Airport Express services, WIAL has recently established an electric bus depot on the old Miramar school site (corner of Broadway and Kauri Street), which includes bus charging stations as well as parking for bus drivers.

Improvements to Taxi, Shuttle & Rideshare Operations and Facilities

Dedicated taxi and shuttle ranks which serve the terminal now accommodate more operators (an increase from 4 to 6 in 2022) to better facilitate customer demand, particularly during peak times.

In addition to taxis, dedicated provision for 3 x Rideshare and 2 x Carshare services is now provided at the terminal, which reflects the increasing popularity of these options, with rideshare now overtaking taxis in terms of total pick-up/drop-off trips at the airport.

Cycling

Recent improvements to the cycling infrastructure at the airport include the installation of 'Locky Docks' in May this year, to better and more safely accommodate cycles, including electric bikes, supporting the ongoing increase in numbers of cyclists accessing the precinct.

Overall then, with a high-frequency, direct, and competitively priced bus service; an increased offering of taxi and ride-share services; and improved facilities for those wishing to cycle, there are good transport options for people needing to access the airport by choices other than private car that have the effect of reducing uplift in parking demand.

4. STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE PARKING OVERSPILL FROM THE PRECINCT

A number of strategies currently serve to manage the effects of overspill parking at the precinct, as follows.

In 2017, WIAL collaborated with the Council on the implementation of time restrictions for on-street parking in the streets around Miramar south, to discourage long stay parking associated with people visiting the

Wellington International Airport Limited: Carparking Summary Report

airport. These restrictions, which extend across the area bounded by Calabar Road, Caledonia Street, Devonshire Road, Ellesmere Avenue, Crawford Green and Broadway, were introduced in August 2017 and limit the use of parking to 24-hours, with residents able to apply for an exclusion permit. Anecdotally WIAL understands that this has been effective in mitigating the conflicting demands between these user groups.

To appropriately accommodate customers at the airport, WIAL has introduced a range of parking options to cater for the different user demands, including dedicated long stay parking, discounted pre-booking rates, and graduated pricing across the precinct. As described above, ongoing monitoring of the on-site parking resource will ensure utilisation is effectively managed and optimised.

In line with the initiatives described under Section 3, promoting and supporting access to the airport by means other than private car will serve to reduce overall parking demand. Longer term strategies for such improvements include WIAL's involvement with 'Let's Get Wellington Moving ("LGWM")', with the current LGWM Preferred Programme Option³ providing a number of associated benefits to increase airport access and travel by non-car modes, including improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and delivery of a bus priority link between the Airport and the CBD, which in turn will support further increase in passenger capacity and service frequency.

We trust this report provides the necessary information required by Condition #37 in relation to associated parking and management thereof at the Airport.

Yours sincerely



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³ [LGWM Preferred Option Report.docx](#)