

AIRPORT NEWS UPDATE ON RUNWAY EXTENSION PLAN CHANGE MARCH 2010

BACKGROUND

In June last year Hamilton International Airport (HIA) commenced public consultation on plans to protect for a future extension of the main runway and upgrade of associated airport infrastructure - when demand requires it.

Hamilton Airport is community owned, with Hamilton City Council being a 50% shareholder, Waipa, Waikato and Matamata-Piako District Councils each have a 15.6% shareholding and Otorohanga District Council has the remaining shareholding.

As a result of the public consultation feedback from the community the Airport has made changes to our proposal, which we would like now like to outline to you below.

FEEDBACK TO PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE

In direct response to feedback obtained from stakeholders, and through advice from specialist acoustic experts, HIA would like to advise:

Changes to the Noise Boundaries

- A night time curfew is proposed on older (noisier) aircraft such as the Boeing 747 and the Boeing 727 to limit night time noise exposure. It is expected that newer (quieter) aircraft will provide adequate aircraft capacity for the region.
- HIA has reduced the forecast growth of general aviation aircraft movements, reducing their contribution to total aircraft noise.

As a direct result of these changes there has been a reduction in the overall size of the three proposed noise boundaries that were published in our June 2009 newsletter. The three noise boundaries are:

1. the Night Noise Boundary (NNB),
2. the Air Noise Boundary (ANB),
3. the Outer Control Boundary (OCB).

Maps showing the original June 2009 proposed noise boundaries and the amended noise boundaries now proposed are available on the Hamilton International Airport website (www.hamiltonairport.co.nz).

Growth in Pilot Training

The runway extension plan change is not required to increase existing aircraft activity. This can already occur within the scope of the existing District Plans.

The proposed runway extension plan change will see a reduction in the current aircraft noise area around the airport. This is because the proposed noise boundaries are more closely aligned to aircraft using the main runway and are based on lower growth assumptions than the existing District Plans.

Consequently, *we are proposing about a 68% overall reduction in the footprint of the current noise boundaries.*

Houses within the Night Noise Boundary

The NNB is a new proposed noise boundary based on the single event noise level of aircraft operating at night, as outlined in the June 2009 newsletter.

As is best practice, it is proposed that houses built in the future will require acoustic insulation in sleeping areas to an appropriate standard to avoid sleep disturbance. This will be implemented through District Plan rules in a similar manner as it is currently for acoustic treatment within the OCB.

For existing houses within the NNB HIA proposes to directly offer a package of acoustic treatment measures to these home owners if and when wide-bodied aircraft (which are passenger or freight aircraft larger than those currently flown by Pacific Blue) commence regular night flights.

HIA is proposing to meet the cost of approved specified acoustic treatment to meet the standard in sleeping areas to protect against sleep disturbance. It is proposed that the *requirement for HIA to provide an acoustic treatment of existing houses within the NNB be included in the District Plan rules.*

The Waipa and Waikato District Plans both currently require new houses, schools, travellers' accommodation and hospitals built within the OCB also be acoustically insulated to minimize the effects of airport noise. There is currently an inconsistency between the Waikato District Plan which requires an internal noise level of no more than Ldn1 40dBA and the Waipa District Plan which requires 45dBA.

Given that the 40dBA internal standard has become accepted best practice in New Zealand it is proposed to amend the Waipa District Plan rules to specify 40dBA, which is the more conservative level.

Noise Management Plan

During public consultation we received local feedback about the noise annoyance from light aircraft. In response HIA has developed a Noise Management Plan and established an Airport Community Liaison Group.

The plan and group will look to bring together local community representatives, aircraft operators, local council representatives and the airport to develop specific measures and aircraft guidelines to help reduce the noise impact on the local community.

The Noise Management Plan also includes a protocol for receiving and acting on noise complaints. A copy of the Noise Management Plan can be found on the Hamilton International Airport website www.hamiltonairport.co.nz.

For further information on how to get involved please contact Andrew Toop on 07 848-9043 or by emailing andrew@hamiltonairport.co.nz.

¹ Ldn is the acoustic measurement term (in decibels) for the day / night cumulative noise energy, including a 10dBA penalty for night flights.

Obstacle Limitation Surfaces

Further survey work has been undertaken to accurately define the position of the 'obstacle limitation surfaces' (OLS) for the extended runway. The OLS is a defined surface in airspace that defines the take off and landing approaches to a runway. They are required to be kept free of obstacles to maintain safety.

On land within Waipa District immediately to the north of the runway extension the OLS is proposed to be about 14 metres lower than it currently is. When the runway extension is fully constructed an oak tree stand within this lowered OLS will be affected and some trees will have to be topped or removed.

HIA has identified that the oak tree stand is a roosting site for native long-tail bats. Given the airport's environmental focus we are planning to take a leadership role in helping to preserve and enhance the bats future in this region. To mitigate the impact on the bat habitat HIA is developing a management plan for the oak tree stand.

- The management plan is currently being developed by one of New Zealand's leading experts on the native long-tail bat, and a local arborist.
- This plan will be designed to keep the bats in the stand long-term and enhance bat habitat through measures such as replanting of oak trees and predator controls.

Subdivision Rules

There were some initial concerns expressed by local landowners in the Country Living Zone in the Waikato District that by adjusting the OCB some would lose their current subdivision rights. This is now not the case.

As a result of these concerns, HIA has:

- Developed a set of subdivision rules that mean there is no change to existing subdivision rights in the Waikato District.
- HIA proposes to incorporate these rules into the Proposed Waikato District Plan.
- In addition, the size of the proposed OCB has been reduced so only a limited number of properties are now affected.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

- The public consultation on the project included an Open Day at the airport on June 19th 2009 attended by about 80 people.
- In addition HIA has undertaken one-on-one meetings with neighbours and other interested parties.
- HIA will shortly be lodging its plan change / variations / notices of requirement with Waipa District, Waikato District and Hamilton City.
- You will have an opportunity for further feedback on these changes once the Councils publicly notify you and call for formal submissions.

In the meantime HIA continues to welcome informal feedback or questions on aircraft noise and the proposed runway extension.

For further information please contact:

Andrew Toop
Manager, Commercial and Growth
Hamilton International Airport
Airport Road, RD 2, HAMILTON
Ph: 07 848 9027
Email: andrew@hamiltonairport.co.nz

See the Hamilton International Airport website Questions and Answers page for further information.