

Report

Whangarei District Airport Strategic Review Phase 1 - Whangarei Airport (Onerahi) Assessment

Prepared for Whangarei District Council (Client)

By Beca Ltd (Beca)

8 December 2014



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Revision History

Revision N°	Prepared By	Description	Date
A	Rick Pemberton	Draft Report	31 October 2014
B/1	Rick Pemberton	Final Report	19 November 2014
C/2	Rick Pemberton	Final Report/Minor Edits/Appdx E added	1 December 2014
3	Rick Pemberton	Final Report/Minor Edits	08 December 2014

Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Rick Pemberton		31 October 2014
Reviewed by	Dennis Hoskin Tristan Hughes		31 October 2014
Approved by	Graeme Roberts		08 December 2014
on behalf of	Beca Ltd		

Executive Summary

The overall objective of the Whangarei District Airport Strategic Study is to ensure that the Whangarei District has an aerodrome facility that is capable of meeting the long term needs (30 to 50 years) of its users and the District. This “Phase 1” report of the Strategic Study examines the existing aerodrome infrastructure and operations at the current Onerahi site and the potential of this site to expand to meet future aviation requirements.

The existing Onerahi aerodrome site encompasses sufficient land for the development of landside, terminal and apron infrastructure to support aviation activity for the foreseeable future. It is also considered likely that there is sufficient capacity in the existing single runway system to support future growth beyond 30 years.

The major issue which undermines the medium to long term viability of the airport at the Onerahi location is the ability to lengthen the existing relatively short runway. A runway lengthening project is considered necessary to meet the requirements of the evolving Air New Zealand regional fleet, and provide an operational capability suitable for likely future aircraft types. A secondary, but significant issue is the ability for the airport to maintain its current operational capability given the existing non-compliances at the aerodrome. These non-compliances may need to be addressed with the adoption of a Civil Aviation Rule 139 Notice of Proposed Rule Making (CAR 139 NPRM) anticipated in 2015 or as part of the certification of a reconfigured runway.

Based on the likely regional fleet development of Air New Zealand, for the airport to remain at its current location in the next 10-20 years will require a minimum runway lengthening to 1,200 to 1,350m to facilitate turboprop operations by 68+ seat aircraft such as the ATR-72 on the existing core Auckland and Wellington routes. A rough order cost for the 1,350m runway utilising “starter extensions” has been estimated at **\$140 Million** (Refer to Figure ES1). A shorter less capable 1,200m runway would still require the same runway platform to be constructed to comply with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) runway strip and Runway End Safety Area (RESA) requirements and would not cost significantly less. Cost saving would only be in the order of only **\$3-3.5 Million**.

In addition to a prohibitive cost, a runway lengthening project would also require the successful navigation of some significant regulatory issues including:

- Alteration to the designation of adjacent land under the Whangarei District Council Operative District Plan 2007. It is considered likely that this would be notified.
- Probably strong iwi/hapu and community objection to reclamation in the coastal marine area
- Regional planning issues
- CAA approval process

Recommendation:

We believe that the prohibitive costs and risks noted above outweigh any benefit of remaining at the current Onerahi site beyond a 15 years period. On that basis we would recommend that the Council:

- Plan to cease regular passenger traffic operations at the Onerahi site in the next 10-15 years
- Identify and secure an alternative site for future aerodrome as soon as possible, as scoped in next phase of this Strategic Study
- Establish a timeline/strategy for the construction and commencement of operations at an alternative site. The timeline will aim to deliver a new operational facility by approximately 2025
- This strategy could include a “gate” for triggering design development subject to a reassessment of regional aircraft fleet facility requirements at 2020 to confirm the “go-live” date for the new facility.

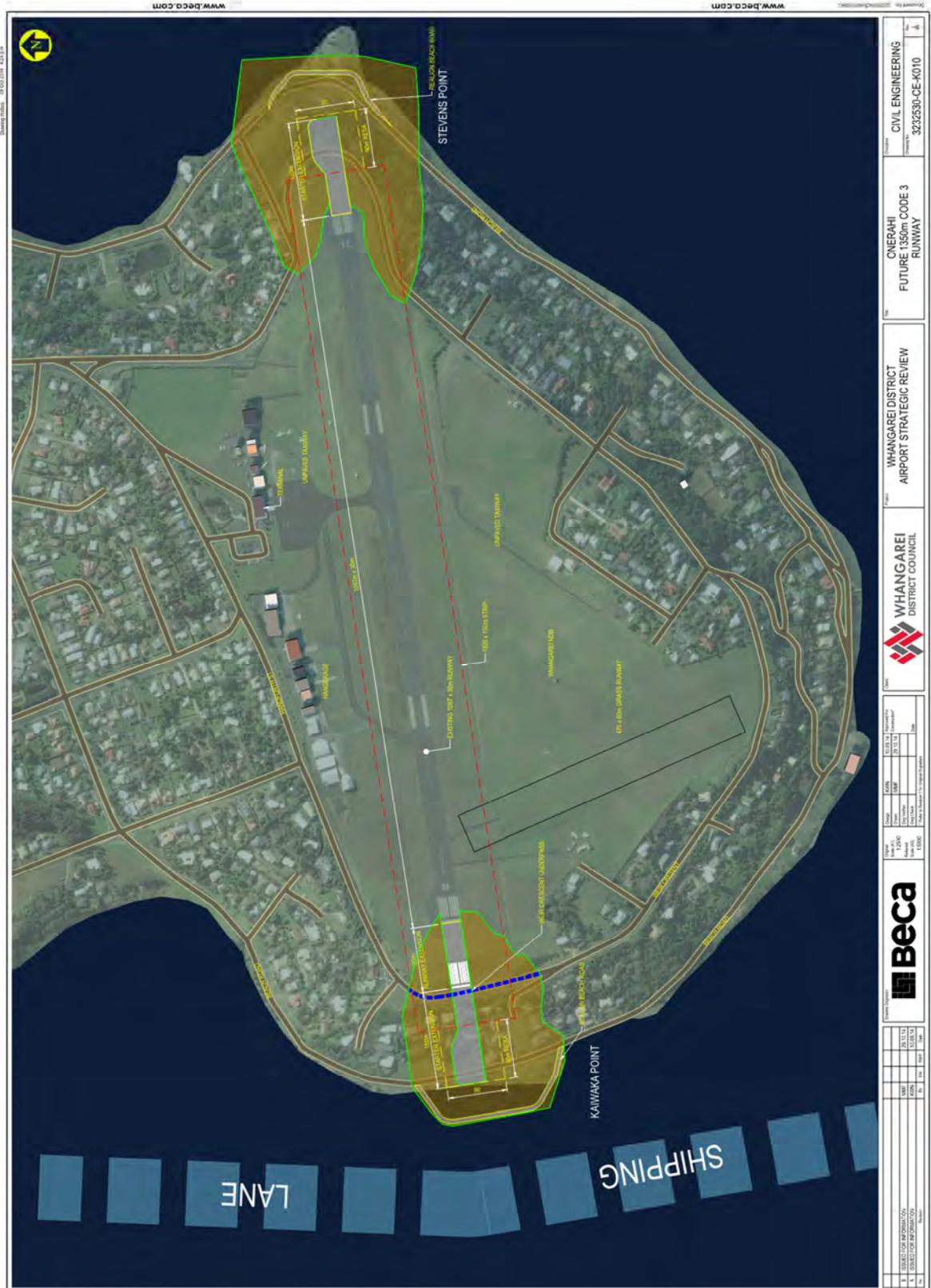


Figure ES1 – 1350m Onerahi Runway