

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL APPOINTED BY THE
TIMARU DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
IN THE MATTER of the hearing of submissions on the Proposed Timaru
District Plan
SUBMITTER Grant Voncent Coldicott, Farmer of Pleasant Point

**GRANT VINCENT COLICOTT IN SUPPORT OF SUBMISSION OF THE
AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND**

Usage of fixed-wing aircraft and airstrips

5 July 2024

PO Box 4341 CHRISTCHURCH 8140
DX WX11179
Tel +64 3 379 7622
Fax +64 3 379 2467

Solicitor: P A C Maw
(philip.maw@wynnwilliams.co.nz)

WYNN WILLIAMS

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Grant Vincent Coldicott. I am a lifestyle farmer and I reside in Totara Valley, about 3 kilometres, as the crow flies, west of the Pleasant Point General Residential Zone. My property is zoned R1 and R2.
- 2 I have prepared this brief of evidence to support the submissions made by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (**AOPA**) and others regarding the Timaru District Council (**Council**) Proposed District Plan (**PDP**). I also have made a submission personally and my evidence is consistent with my personal submission. My submission relates in particular to rule GRUZ-R14 and the associated recommendations in the section 42A report. My evidence sets out how I use small-fixed wing aircraft to provide context for how the activity currently operates in the Timaru District.

USAGE OF AIRCRAFT AND AIRSTRIPS

- 3 I am a Recreational Aircraft Association of New Zealand (**RAANZ**) Authorised Testing Officer, Senior Flight Instructor, Test Pilot and Inspection Authority. For many years I have held a delegation from the Director of the Civil Aviation Authority (**CAA**) to issue flight certificates to pilots and flight permits for aircraft and have been involved in the development of microlight flying rules. I have been flying for 46 years and hold a current Private Pilot's Licence. I have been operating my own personal aircraft from my family's farm property, since purchasing the bare land block in 1993. The purchase of the block was based almost wholly on its suitability for an airstrip. The first building consent issued for my property was for the hangar.
- 4 Over the last 31 years, I have flown five of my own aircraft from my airstrip. One I built on the farm in 2006, the others have been Cessnas and microlights. I built another plane on the property in 2017 and the maiden flight and test flying were done from the farm strip. I have hosted many flying friends, who have flown in from local and more distant destinations.
- 5 My flying is for personal recreation, however, I do choose to use my plane to commute, rather than drive, where the opportunities allow. Usually, my wife or other family members are with me. Over the years, I have flown most of our neighbours, their children and any friends who

happen to be about, over the district and around their farms. Sometimes, I land and collect passengers from their home farms. In most cases, neighbours and friends approach me for the flight. My son started his flying career from our farm and now flies commercially in NZ and overseas. My granddaughter is now looking to be the next generation of pilots in the family. In all my flying activities, I am sensitive to and considerate of the rights of my neighbours and others, to their peaceful enjoyment of their own properties.

- 6 I have structured my approach and departure tracks to be clear of buildings or potentially sensitive stock, or any other places where the use of the aircraft could cause a nuisance. I do not fly endless circuits or conduct flight training from my strip, instead I use either Timaru, Ashburton or Rangitata Island Airfields, which are specifically available for that purpose. I have never had a complaint regarding the use of aircraft or the airstrip at my property. The only comments I have received have been in absolute support of my flying activities. There has never been an incident or accident on my airstrip.
- 7 In the last 31 years, I have flown about 2000 flying hours, an average of 65 hours per year, a little over one hour per week, either originating or terminating at the farm. For that one-hour flight, the actual time of the aircraft taking off or landing, for each phase, is about 45 seconds, then the aircraft is gone. During the landing phase, there is very little noise as the engine is at idle. Often, I fly to other farm airstrips in the county, also on private property, for social aviation activities, meeting friends and to keep my flying skills current, on more challenging airstrips. To my knowledge, none of my airstrip owning friends within the Timaru Strict have ever had a complaint. Often, due to weather or ground conditions, I may not be able to fly from my home airstrip for some weeks.
- 8 My airstrip does not meet the setback requirements for a permitted activity proposed within GRUIZ-R14 of 500m metres from a noise sensitive activity. Despite this, my neighbours within the proposed setback have never complained, or taken issue with my recreational airstrip activity.

LACK OF ISSUE

- 9 I am not aware of any issues within the Timaru District regarding how small fixed wing aircraft or permanent airstrips for recreational activity

are used. I personally have never received a noise complaint or any complaints about flying my aircraft or using my airstrip. Over the years, there have been many new houses built in the surrounding area and all owners have known of my flying in advance.

- 10 I believe GRUZ-R14 is imposing unnecessary regulation on the activities of small, fixed wing aircraft and associated aviation activities despite no evidence of them having caused noise or amenity issues within the Timaru District. GRUZ-R14 is attempting to solve a problem that is not present. The controls within GRUZ-R14 arbitrarily restrict the rights of landowners and ratepayers to enjoy and maximise the use of their properties when there is no clear or compelling evidence that there are issues to be addressed. Flying is a pursuit that adds value and supports communities and should be encouraged, and not unnecessarily restricted. Aviation is an integral part of our province. Richard Pearse made history in early 1903 with pioneering aviation experiments and agricultural aviation provided the building blocks for pastoral success. Flying of small, fixed wing aircraft is already regulated by the Civil Aviation Act 1990 which is adequate and provides the most appropriate limits.

CONCLUSION

- 11 I ask for the flying of small-fixed wing aircraft on permanent or non-permanent airstrips to continue to be a permitted activity, within any restrictions are to frequency of use of setbacks, and for small fixed-wing aircraft to be excluded from being controlled by GRUZ-R14.



Grant Vincent COLDICOTT

5 July 2024