

FAQs

PROPOSED SOLAR FARM - WHAKATĀNE AIRPORT

What does the Whakatāne Airport Masterplan involve?

The masterplan outlines long-term strategic initiatives, including the exploration of a solar farm, increasing hangar capacity, flight school and terminal upgrades. The plan can be viewed at whakatane.govt.nz

Why is a solar farm being considered?

The solar farm is being explored as a potential way to increase energy resilience for the community and generate revenue or energy benefits for the airport.

Will the solar farm affect my lease?

It's too early to determine whether or how individual leases may be impacted. The feasibility study will clarify which parts of the land are suitable for a solar farm. First, we need to understand more about the connection point into the grid— where electricity from the solar panels would feed into the network —and its capacity. While we know the connection point would be along the golf course (eastern) side of the land, the study will help us better understand the feasibility of connecting and identify any potentially affected land parcels.

How long will this project take?

If it's feasible, the solar farm project would take a few years to plan, get approved, and build.

Who is conducting the feasibility study?

The study is being carried out in collaboration with a solar farm expert and is expected to be completed by March 2025. We are currently finalising the procurement of the organisation to undertake this work.



How will leaseholders be involved in the process?

Leaseholders will be kept informed throughout the project. An in-person meeting will be arranged in the New Year to discuss the project further and answer questions. Additional consultation will take place if the project progresses beyond feasibility.

Will the solar farm impact airport operations?

No. The airport's core operations will remain the top priority, and no plans will compromise its functionality.

What happens if the solar farm is not viable?

If the feasibility study determines the solar farm is not viable, no further action will be taken regarding this project.

What about my land lease?

At this stage, the current agreement remains in place. Lease reviews are scheduled for June 2025, with all leases set to expire on 30 November 2025. We plan to begin discussions with you about this from March next year.

How can I share my concerns or ask questions?

During Council opening hours you can reach out to Mark Read on 306 0500 with any questions or concerns.

Details for an in-person meeting with leaseholders will be shared early in the New Year.

