

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource
Management Act 1991
AND
IN THE MATTER OF The Proposed One Plan
notified by Manawatu-
Wanganui Regional Council

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ROBERT COLIN OWEN
FOR NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE
OVERALL SUBMISSIONS ON THE PROPOSED ONE PLAN**

Dated: 3 July 2008

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 My full name is Robert Colin Owen.
- 1.2 I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Science (Honours) and Master of Science
- 1.3 I am employed by New Zealand Defence Force, (NZDF) within the Joint Logistics and Support Organisation as Environmental Manager. In that role I oversee a team of eight staff responsible for all aspects of the interactions between NZDF activities and the environment. The role covers the activities of the three services (Army, Navy and Air Force) throughout New Zealand. Specifically, in relation to the Proposed One Plan, I am responsible for environmental management in relation to the Army Training Area and Camp at Waikouru, Linton Camp, Ohakea Air Base associated smaller training areas.
- 1.4 I am familiar with the Proposed One Plan (One Plan). I have coordinated the preparation of NZDF submissions and further submissions on the One Plan and have met several times with staff of Horizons Regional Council during the consultation and submissions stages of the plan preparation process.

1.5 NZDF will be presenting detailed planning evidence at subsequent hearings. My intention in this statement is to provide some background information of Defence land holdings and activities, relevant to all of our submissions; and to address the general aspects of our submission, not covered in subsequent hearings.

2.0 General Overview of NZDF in the Region

2.1 I understand that the Hearings Committee has read our submission and further submissions. To supplement the information on NZDF land holdings contained in our submissions I have attached to this statement maps and aerial photographs depicting the key locations referred to in submissions and in this statement.

2.2 NZDF is a significant landowner in the region with major holdings at:

- Waikouru Military Training Area
- RNZAF Base Ohakea
- Linton Military Camp
- Defence Housing Area (Bulls)
- Raumai Air Weapons Range

and several other minor facilities.

2.3 The **Waikouru Military Training Area**, at approximately 63,000ha, is the principal training area for the NZ Army, and at times accommodates the Air Force, Navy, Police, and, under Inter-Government agreements, the Singapore Armed Forces.

2.4 Army has occupied the bulk of the training area since the early 1940s and the more eastern parts since the mid 1970s. It is intended that use of this site by Army will continue into the future.

2.5 The Waikouru Training Area is extremely valuable to NZDF as a training area and is now the only location in the North Island that NZDF can use to conduct a significant amount of live firing because of the size of the area. NZDF conducts its business on the basis that the Waikouru Training Area is irreplaceable.

- 2.6 **RNZAF Base Ohakea**, at approximately 300 ha, is used as an airfield with associated infrastructure, including aircraft and equipment maintenance and housing.
- 2.7 The long term importance of Base Ohakea to NZDF cannot be overemphasised in the light of the planned consolidation of Air Force operations at Base Ohakea.
- 2.8 **Linton Military Camp**, at approximately 260ha, is used intensively for housing, training facilities, office accommodation and vehicle and equipment storage and maintenance. While the Waikouru Training Area is vital to training, Linton Camp is the Army's primary North Island base facility.

4.0 Background to NZDF Submissions

- 4.1 NZDF has made submissions on particular parts of the One Plan and will present detailed planning evidence at the relevant upcoming hearings. At these hearings, the Hearings Committee will have the opportunity to make a number of relatively minor amendments to address our concerns.
- 4.2 The following paragraphs provide background for the specific submission points that will be discussed at the upcoming hearings.
- 4.3 Need to undertake activities with minimum restriction**
- 4.4 NZDF undertakes activities that are nationally and internationally important, including training of personnel for domestic and foreign purposes. Protection of the ability of NZDF to undertake these activities within its existing and established landholdings is very important.
- 4.5 The One Plan would impose a number of constraints on NZDF activities that are of concern to NZDF. In particular, in respect of the Waikouru Training Area, NZDF is not able to accept the constraints on training that would result from the One Plan becoming operative in its present form.

- 4.6 The majority of the WMTA land in the training area is classed through the One Plan as rare and threatened habitat or at risk habitat. Parts of the training area are classed in the One Plan as "Highly erodible". Waterways in the training area are included in Water Conservation Notices and are acknowledged as providing valuable habitat for both introduced and native aquatic flora and fauna. These classifications and rules referring to them have the potential to unduly restrict Defence activities if appropriate exceptions are not provided.
- 4.7 In respect of the Waikouru and Raumai training areas, the One Plan policies and rules tend to treat undeveloped lands and waterways as if they were "unused" and primarily of value as natural environment for conservation purposes. This is not the reality for Defence land. One of the primary values of what appears to be unused land in the training areas is to provide a secure zone in which live firing can take place without risk to people on the ground. Much of the WMTA used for that purpose is undeveloped and is essentially in its "natural" condition because the Army has carried out weed and pest control over a long period of time and has voluntarily managed and restricted the impact of training activities.
- 4.8 The One Plan policies and rules tend to treat developed rural lands as "farm" and to provide for agricultural and horticultural land uses. NZDF's long term use of the land and waterways for accommodation and training of operational military units is potentially (and unintentionally) disadvantaged by this approach. NZDF accepts that the One Plan is focussed on achieving sustainable management of the majority of the region that is farmed but believe that it's own, relatively unusual, activities have been unnecessarily compromised in the process.
- 4.9 Much of NZDF's specific submission points are related to making provisions within the One Plan for the continuation of NZDF activities.

4.10 Sustainable Land Management Plans and Codes of Practice

4.11 NZDF aims to undertake its activities in a sustainable manner. For example, the land at the Air Weapons Range at Raumai is as close to its "natural" condition as possible due to vegetation restoration and dune stabilisation activities undertaken by the RNZAF in conjunction with Horizons Regional Council.

4.12 At Waikouru and Raumai and, to a lesser extent, at Linton and Ohakea, NZDF manages the environmental effects of its activities through Range Standing Orders (RSO) and unit Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

4.13 RSO control the nature of training activities which may be conducted in various locations and the limitations and precautions which must be applied. At Waikouru RSO are, in part, developed from the Sustainable Land Management Strategy which focuses on achievement of a balance between Army's training objectives and the maintenance of the present environmental values of the land and water.

4.14 The One Plan seeks to promote the development of whole farm business plans and offers some relief from the rules on land disturbance and vegetation control where such a plan is in place.

4.15 NZDF endorses that approach and believes that a similar management approach should be extended to non-farm land such as Defence, forestry and perhaps conservation land.

4.16 NZDF as infrastructure provider

4.17 At Waikouru, Linton and Ohakea, NZDF provides community services and infrastructure, such as water and wastewater services to the resident military communities (approximately 5000 people) and in Waikouru to the adjacent civilian community as well.

4.18 The One Plan policies and rules recognise the role of Territorial Authorities as service providers and create special provisions and obligations in relation to water and wastewater services. The significant service provider role that NZDF plays is not recognised. NZDF and the military communities are disadvantaged.

4.19 Definition of "Property" and "Public Water Supply"

4.20 The One Plan contains definitions of Property and Public Water Supply which include reference to certificates of title. The large areas of Defence land in the region are not subject to land titles and activities on Defence land would fall outside these definitions.

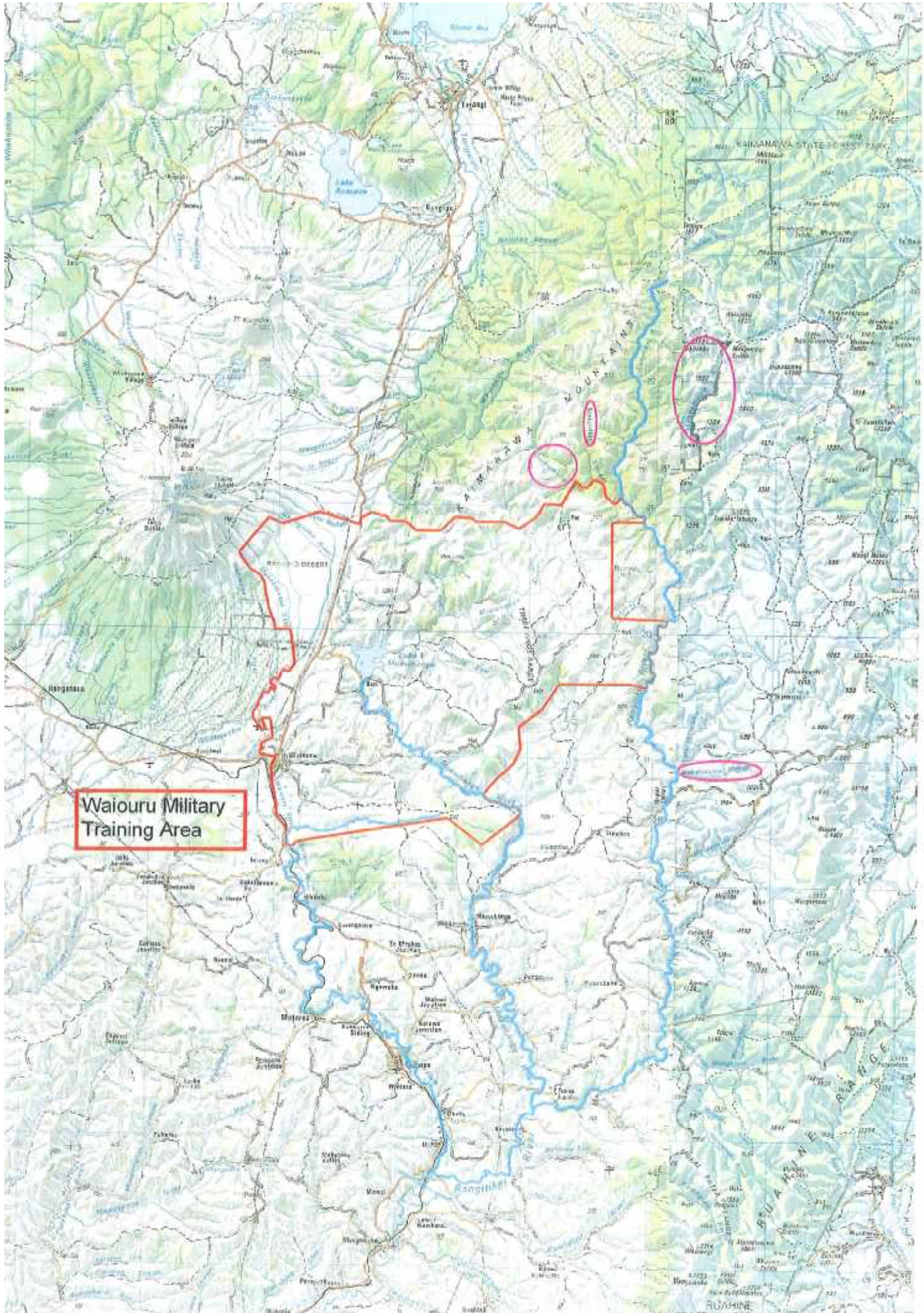
4.21 NZDF has raised this issue with Council staff in discussion during the consultation process and has been advised that the Officers Reports will recommend appropriate changes. The Officers Report for this overall hearing contains an appropriate recommendation as to changes to the definition of "property".

4.22 The Officers Report for the Land Hearings contains an alternative recommendation as to the definition of "property" which retains a reference to Certificates of Title and which incorrectly indicates NZDF support for that definition.

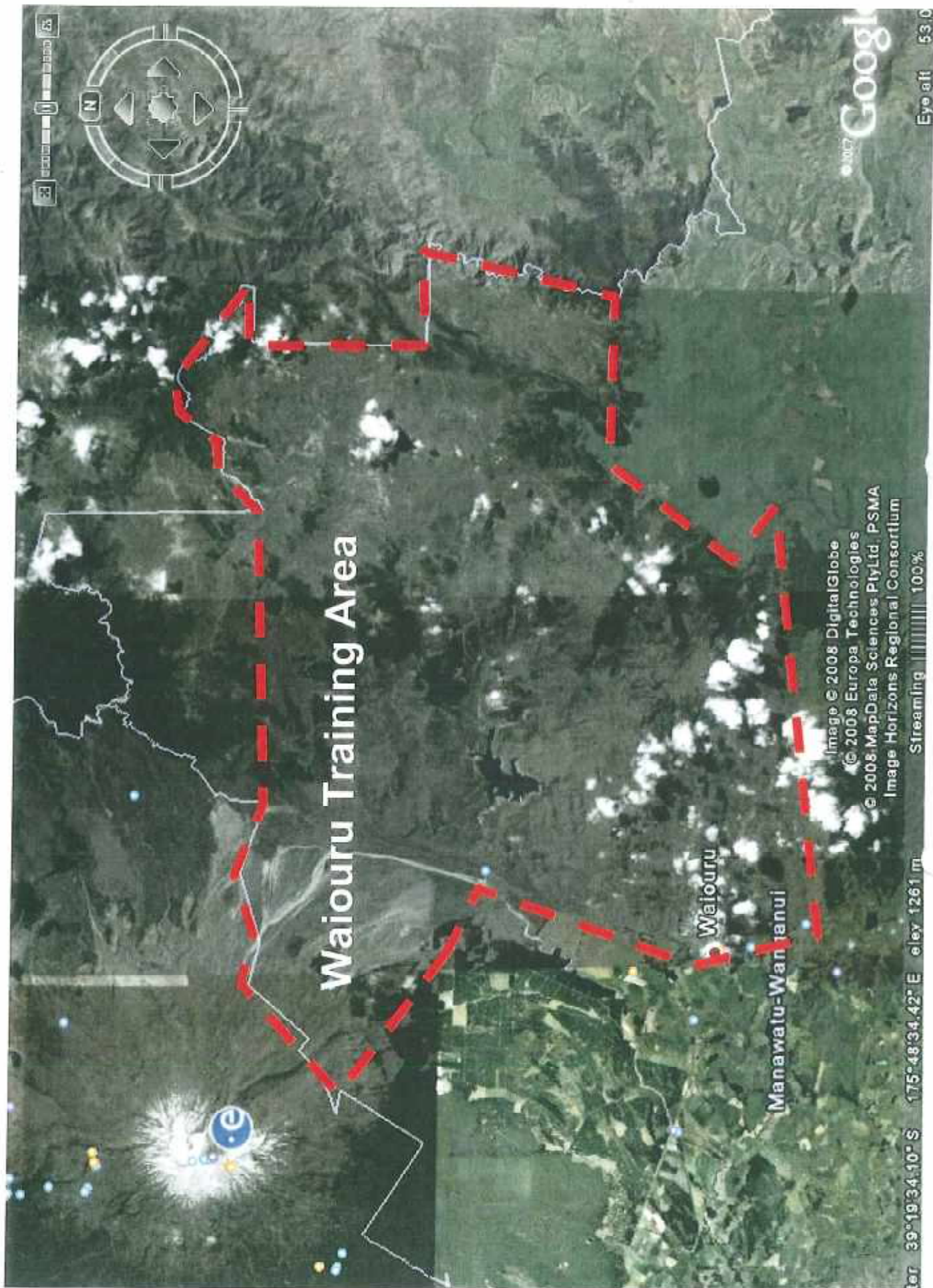
4.23 NZDF requests that the Hearings Committee accept and adopt the definition in the Overall Plan Officer Report over the definition proposed in the Land Officer report. Reference to Certificates of Title in definitions will exclude Defence land and create jurisdictional issues.

5 Summary

- 5.1 NZDF is a significant landowner carrying out activities which are somewhat unusual but nevertheless essential. Continued conduct of those activities is potentially disadvantaged by the focus of the One Plan on management of the effects of conventional productive land uses.
- 5.2 We believe that that disadvantage is easily corrected and will be presenting detailed planning evidence at subsequent hearings containing our proposals.



Waikato Military Training Area





Bulls

Ohakea Air Base

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Streaming 100%

40°12'21.89" S 175°24'18.08" E elev 52 m

Eye alt 7.58 km

Ohakea Air Base



Google

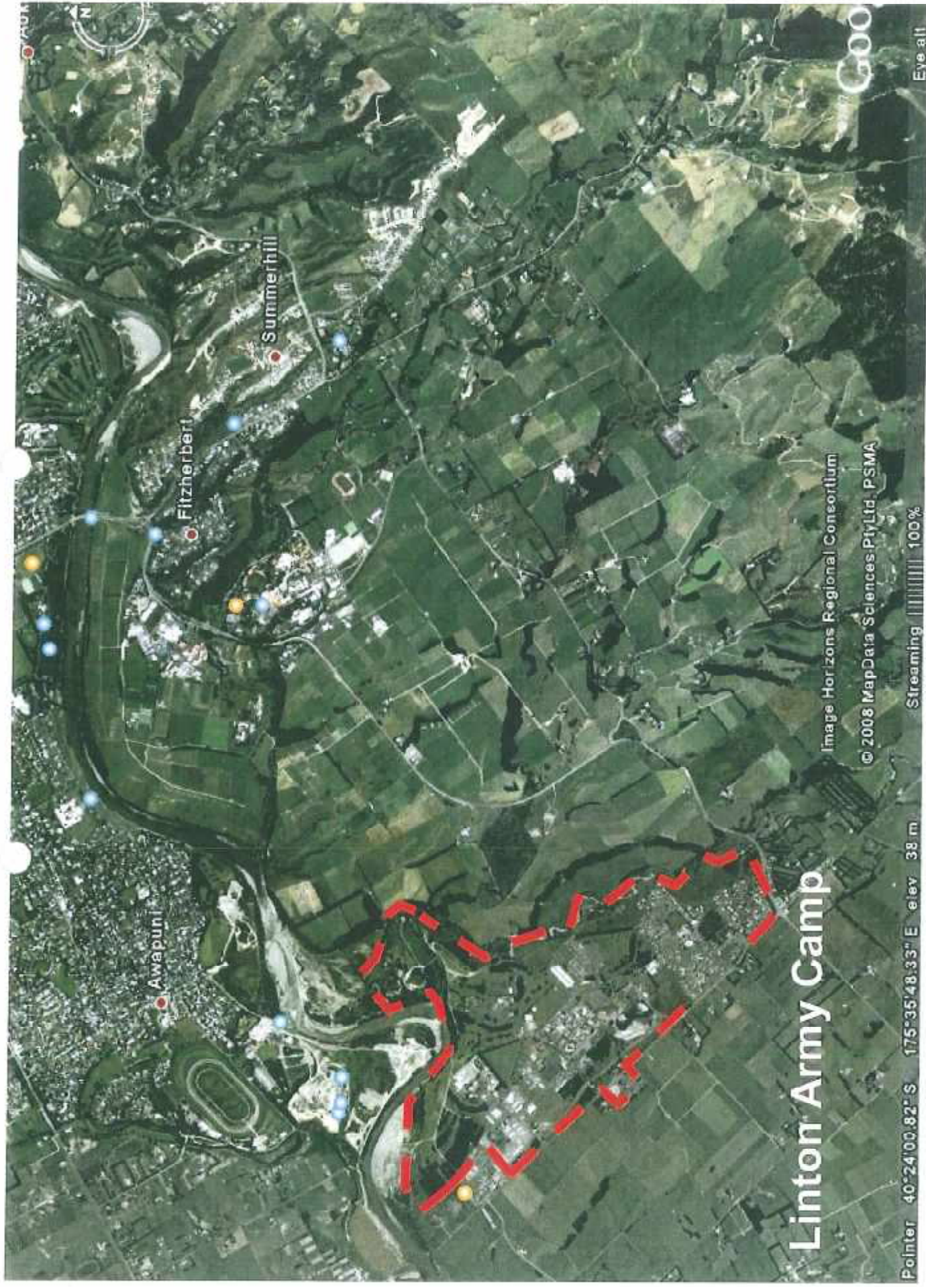
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Streaming 100%

Lat 40°11'54.61" S 175°22'48.63" E elev 43 m



Linton Army Camp

Image Horizons Regional Consortium
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Pointer 40°24'00.82"S 175°35'48.33"E elev 38 m

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Eye alt

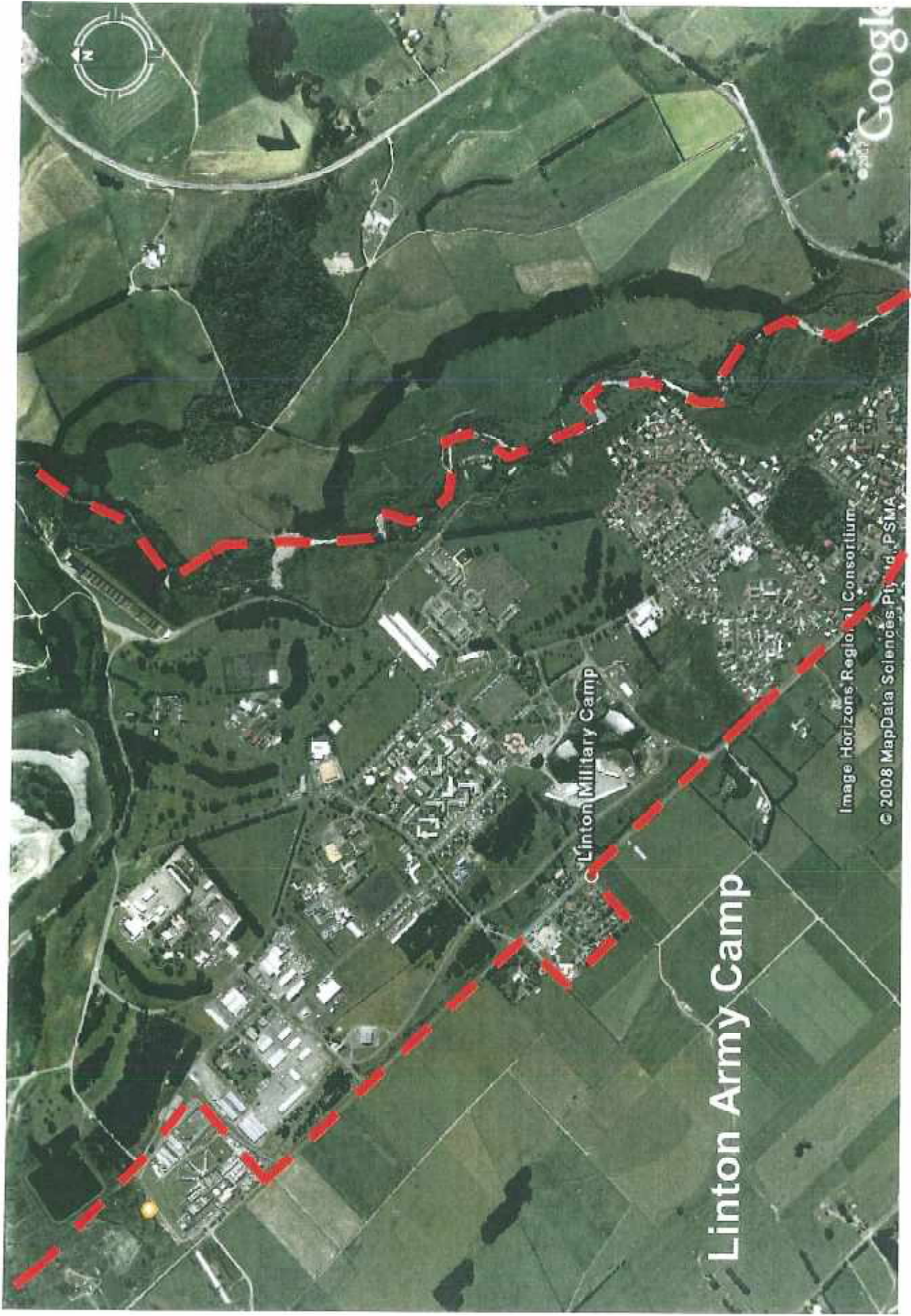


Image Horizons Regional Consortium

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Raumai Air Weapons Range



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40°11'06.66" S 175°14'02.40" E elev 20 m

Streaming 100%

Eye alt 15.38 k

Raumai Air Weapons Range

