

# **Concept of Operations (CONOPS)**



## **Winch Launching Proposal 2025**

**Gliding Club of Victoria**

# **Benalla (YBLA)**

**Issue 1.1**



## 1 Version Control

Issue	Prepared	Date	Change
Issue 1	JN	11 May 2025	Initial release.
Issue 1.1	JN	19 Sep 2025	RWY 26R added.

## 2 Introduction

The Gliding Club of Victoria (GCV) seeks to obtain approval for Winch Launching as an alternative launch method to Aerotowing at Benalla Aerodrome (YBLA).

The purpose of this CONOPS document is to broadly define how Winch Launch operations will occur at YBLA.

## 3 Overview

All Winch Launch operations at Benalla will be carried out in accordance with *Gliding Australia* Manual of Standard Procedures Part 2, Operations, the *Gliding Australia* Winch Launching Manual (OPS0007), and applicable sections of Part 91 of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASRs), 1998.

## 4 Phase-In Plan

The GCV will implement a gradual phase-in of Winch Launch operations:

Winter 2025: Limited Trial Operations conducted by personnel with prior Winch Launch experience.

Spring 2025: Instructor Training.

Summer 2025: General Operations.

Autumn 2026: Review Feasibility in consultation with Benalla Rural City Council and stakeholders.

All Winch Launch operations during the phase-in process will take place separately to Aerotowing operations. That is, parallel operations will not be permitted during the trial.

## 5 Winch Vehicle

The Winch is a purpose-built machine which has previously been used extensively for Glider Winch Launch Operations. Prior to use at GCV, the Winch has been overhauled to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and reliable. Furthermore, the Winch has undergone testing at a nearby Gliding site.



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## 6 Operational Runway(s)

The Operational Runway is limited to Runway 08L and 26R only. Unless otherwise specified, all operations will take place inside the existing runway staging area (gable markers). Unless otherwise specified, the airfield layout and infrastructure is not modified.

The glider is positioned on the threshold, and the Winch is positioned at the opposite end of the runway. Cable retrieval will be by vehicle down one side of the Operational Runway.

Refer to Appendix A - and Appendix C - for operational drawing showing the layout of the Operational Runway.

Winch operations on Runway 08L/26R will only be possible with a northerly or southerly wind component of less than 5 knots. Any crosswind component will require management by the duty instructor and winch driver.

## 7 Marshalling Areas

All gliders will be marshalled clear of the launch area in accordance with *Gliding Australia* MOSP 2, Operations relating to separation and clearance. Winch launching equipment will never be parked, positioned or stored within the Runway 08R/26L Staging Area (inside the Gable Markers). This ensures that Runway 08R/26L operations are not impacted.

Refer to Appendix B and Appendix D for operational drawing showing position of Marshalling Areas for runway 08L and 26R, respectively.

## 8 GCV Winch Launch Operations Manual

### 8.1 Overview

All operational procedures will be documented in the GCV Winch Launching Manual (WLM). Members and visiting pilots will be required to ensure that their winch launching methods meet the GCV WLM. The WLM will adhere to all regulatory requirements and will account for local threats and risks as identified and managed by the completed Risk Assessment, WA1\_2025.

The WLM is maintained by the Winch Team Lead – Checking, Training and Standards and the Chief Flying Instructor.



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## 8.2 Common Traffic Advisory Frequency

The Ground station will maintain an active listening watch on the Benalla CTAF, 125.6MHz. All inbound or overflying aircraft will be alerted to the in-progress Winch operations by the Duty Instructor or his/her delegate in accordance with the GCV WLM.

Standard radio phraseology will be used by all ground crews, pilots and winch drivers during the course of winch operations. The radio phraseology is provided in the GCV WLM.

## 8.3 Crew Training

The Phase-In plan is designed to allow ample time for appropriate training of instructors, club pilots, winch drivers and ground crews. It is acknowledged that developing a suitable Winch Launching knowledge basis in a large club like GCV will take considerable time. All training will be performed in accordance with references [1], [2] and [3].

## 8.4 Abnormal Procedures

### 8.4.1 Stray Cables

Risk of stray cables is to be managed by a combination of:

1. The Duty Instructor's monitoring of the surface wind conditions;
2. Pilot technique and training;
3. Winch driver technique and training;
4. Ample maintenance of the Winch and Cable Assemblies.

Prior to each winch launch commencing, the duty crew will be responsible for ensuring that the cable retrieve vehicle is in a state and position that would allow for quick deployment and recovery of a stray cable.

### 8.4.2 Runway Inspections

If any hardware is lost from the Cable Assembly during operations, runway inspections will be performed by the duty crew until the missing hardware is fully recovered. End-of-day inspections of the Winch and Cable Assemblies will also detect missing hardware or other Foreign Object Debris (FOD) which would pose a hazard to other airfield users.

## 8.5 Emergency Procedures

All emergency procedures will be trained in accordance with references [1], [2], and [3]. The third-party risk assessment (refer reference [3]) has not identified any unmitigated risks to third parties during unforeseen procedures or simulated emergency procedures.



## 9 Summary

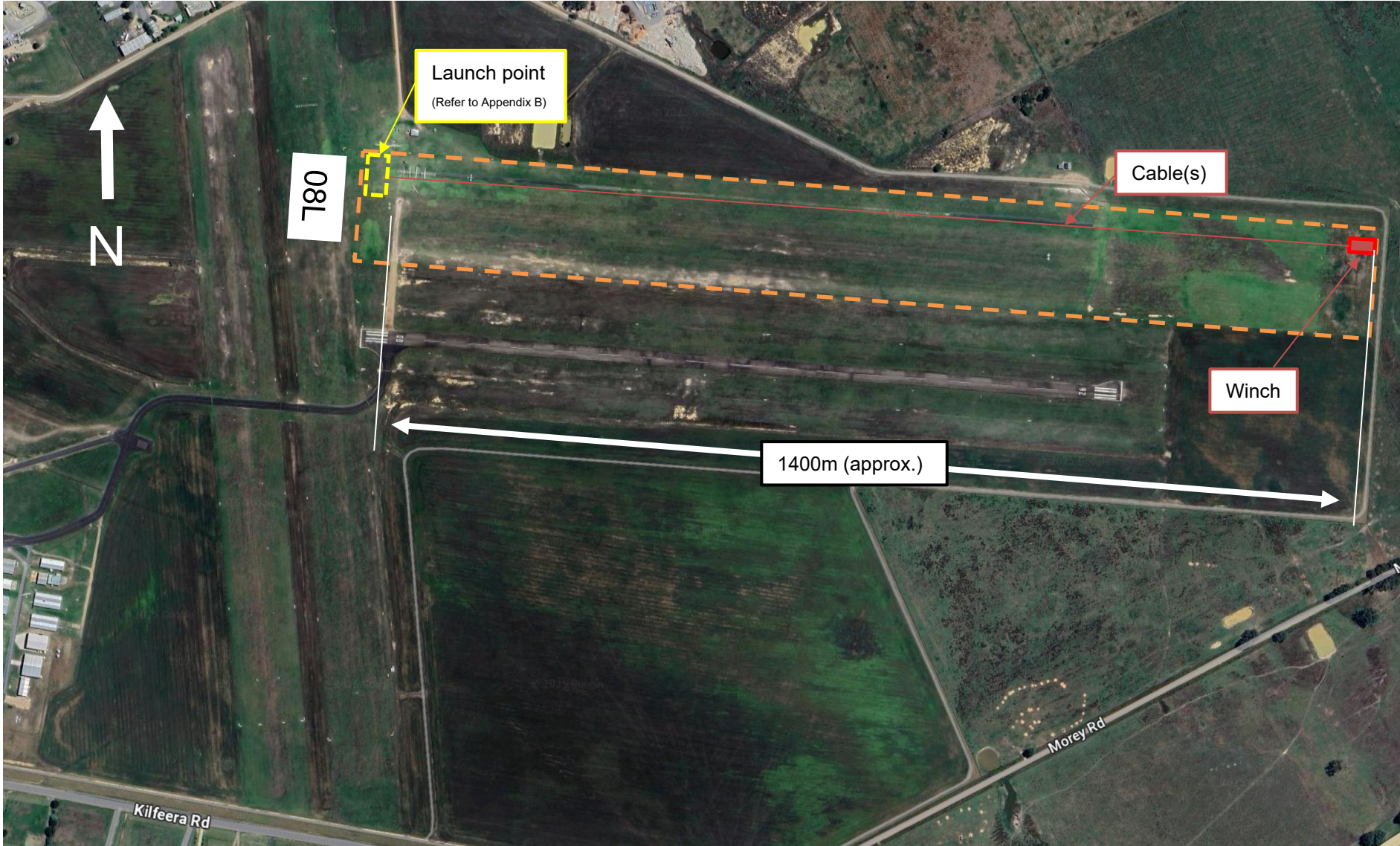
The GCV is committed to implementing a safe, reliable and accessible alternative launching method at YBLA which minimises disruption to other airfield users. Through appropriate management of risks and standard procedures, the GCV will maintain the overall level of safety of other aviation stakeholders and its own operations.

## 10 References

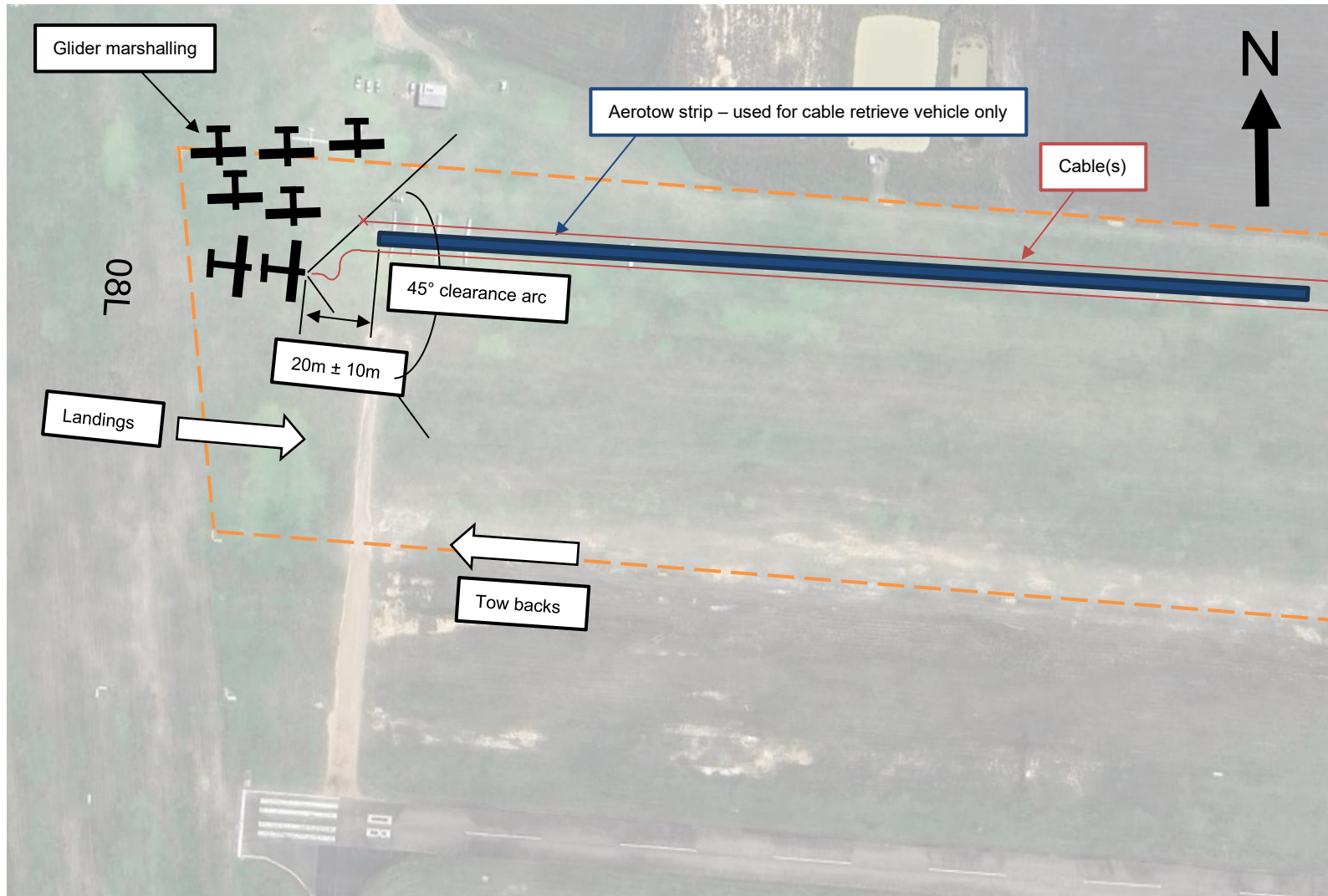
- [1] *Gliding Australia* Manual of Standard Procedures (MOSP) Part 2, Operations.
- [2] *Gliding Australia* Winch Launching Manual (OPS0007).
- [3] *Gliding Club of Victoria* Winch Launching Risk Assessment, Third-party (WA1\_2025).
- [4] *Gliding Club of Victoria* Winch Launching Manual Issue 1.4 or later
- [5] *Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA)*, Part 91 Plain English Guide.
- [6] *Gliding Australia* Operations Advisory Notice (OAN) 04/24, Reinstating Winch Launch Operations



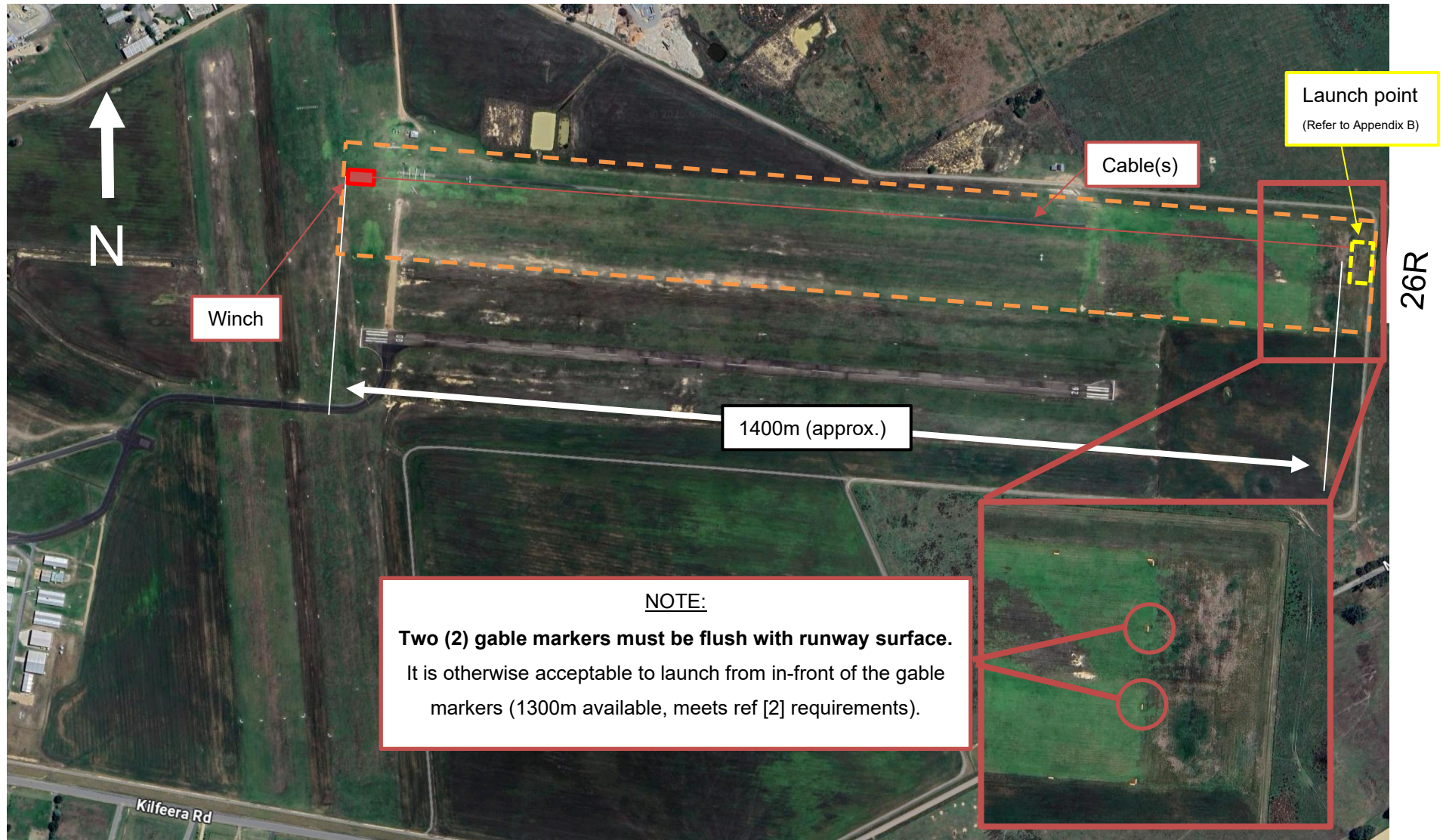
Appendix A - Operation Schematic – Runway 08L



Appendix B - Launch Point Layout – Runway 08L



## Appendix C - Operation Schematic – Runway 26R



## Appendix D - Launch Point Layout – Runway 26R

