

Response to circular seeking expressions of interest in relocating to the proposed Airfield at Williamsdale, A.C.T.

Organization	Operations	Type of Aircraft	Number of Aircraft
Airport Flying School	Training Charter	G.A. Fixed Wing Singles & Twins	8
Heli-Air	Training, Charter & Agriculture	Helicopters Light and Medium	14
Pilot Preferred Aircraft	Aircraft Hire	Fixed wing single	1
	Ultralight Training Currently in Tumut	Ultralight	3
Masling Aviation	General Aviation maintenance and repairs	Fixed wing single	1
Brindabell Airlines	Flight training	Fixed wing single and twins	14 Usage. See letter.
	Ultralight flight training	Ultralight	Intent expressed to start flying school
Private		Fixed wing twin	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	2
Private		Vintage single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Vintage single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	4
		Helicopter	1
		Motor glider	1
		Ultralight	2
Private		Ultralight	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Fixed wing single	1
Private		Ultralight	2

Private	Ultralight	1
Private	Ultralight	1
Private	Ultralight	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
	Ultralight	1
Private	Ultralight	2
Private	Ultralight	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
Private	Ultralight	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
	Ultralight	1
Private	Fixed wing single	1
Private	Ultralight	1
Private pilot	Nil	
Private pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Ultralight pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Private pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Private Pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Private Pilot	Sold Aircraft. Hires commercially	
Private Pilot	Nil, Hires Commercially	
Ultralight Pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Ultralight pilot	Nil, Hires commercially	
Ultralight pilot?		
Electrical contractor		

**Airport Flying School**

A.C.N 008 579 235

A.B.N 75 008 579 235

Cnr. Nomad Drive
& Walker Street
Canberra Airport

Phone: 02) 6248 6292
A/H: 02) 6248 6292
Fax: 02) 6257 9440

P.O Box 887
Fyshwick
A.C.T 2609

January 19, 2004

Mr Chris Price**Dear Chris**

Following our recent discussion regarding the possibility of a new General Aviation Airfield at Williamsdale, I would like to formally confirm that we would be very keen to support such a development. We are looking to relocate our training facilities and aircraft operations in order to provide us with potential for expansion. As you are aware we currently operate a fleet of seven aircraft and are looking to acquire two more in the next six months.

In addition we would like to discuss further the possibility of a mutually beneficial financial arrangement whereby we would provide the local administrative facilities and personnel in exchange for operational cost savings at the new facility.

I look forward to further detailed discussions and if I can be of any assistance in the preparation of your proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

**Jeff Reed
Managing Director**

000078



HELIA

Heli Air Pty Ltd
ABN 50 082 569 408

11 February 2004

Mr C. Price

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the proposed airstrip at Williamsdale. I believe this will be a very exciting opportunity for you and our Company would consider the use of your airstrip outside of the control zone.

Our Company currently operates 14 aircraft throughout the region, from Robinson R22 for training to the latest technology, Agusta A119 Koala.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on 6257-0777.

Yours sincerely,

 **DEBORAH MAINSTONE**
Chief Pilot/Chief Flying Instructor

o **ADMINISTRATION**
Level 2, 212 Pirie St.
Adelaide SA 5000
Ph 08 8100 1100
Fax 08 8100 1133
email office@helair.com
web www.helair.com

o **CANBERRA**
Hangar 5, Ceres Rd,
Canberra Airport ACT
Ph 02 6257 0777
Fax 02 6257 0999

o **WAGGA WAGGA**
Airport Wagga Wagga
PO Box 139,
Forest Hill NSW 2651
Ph 02 6922 8888
Fax 02 6922 8777

Masling Aviation Pty. Ltd.

General Aviation Maintenance & Repairs

ACN 008 542 489 Certificate of Approval C529190

000077

Hangar 4, Widgeon Road
Canberra Airport ACT 2609

(02) 6247 1157
Fax (02) 6247 1321

18 the February 2004
Chris Price

Dear Chris

In response to your letter, regarding the proposed new general aviation airport at Williamsdale. Should the general aviation aircraft be relocated from Canberra airport to Williamsdale, we would have to give extreme consideration in moving to the new location to maintain a viable business.

Regards

Robert Masling
Masling Aviation



000076

Chris Price

Dear Chris

RE: Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Brindabella Airlines welcome the prospect of the proposed airstrip at Williamsdale.

With the growing RPT traffic at Canberra Airport an airstrip at Williamsdale would be an asset to our ever growing flight training school with a fleet of 14 aircraft.

Flight training is an integral part of our company and we would certainly consider moving some of the flight training operation to this location once the strip was operational.

If you wish to discuss this issue further please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

Mr Jeffrey Boyd

CEO

20th February 2004

Brindabella Airlines Pty Ltd ABN 90 083 162 038

3 Rogan Place, Canberra Airport, P.O. Box 1542 Fyshwick ACT 2609 - Tel: +612 62488711 Fax: +612 62480087
www.brindabella-airlines.com.au info@brindabella-airlines.com.au

A U S T R A L I A - W I D E

000075

Mr. C. Price

Dear Chris

Ref: Grass Airfield OCTA in Canberra

The AUF has informed me by letter that you have proposed development of a grass airfield on the Monaro Highway, north of Canberra.

I am absolutely delighted to think that Canberra's ultralight community may, after a long interval, have direct access to an ultralight airfield and I would certainly expect to be a regular user.

Should such an airfield become a reality and should it be suitable I would hope to use it as a base for a flying school based on the use of Jabiru ultralight aircraft. My son, a friend of ours and I have been planning for such a flying school for some time but there has been no suitable airfield in the ACT or nearby.

Assuming that you are successful in getting approval for the development and the airfield is constructed I would hope to become a tenant on a permanent basis.

Best regards,

20 February 2004

FROM :

Feb. 18 2004 08:47PM P1
000074

18th February 2004

Mr Chris Price

Re: Proposed airstrip at Williamsdale

Dear Chris,

Privatisation as a government policy is perhaps an enviable philosophical political goal, especially in the US with a population of 300 million, however, what works in that country with its huge population, certainly has its shortfalls in Australia. Our entire population is only slightly larger than one of their larger cities. In Australia, major hospitals, railways and airports should be state owned and run, if all of the community is to have equal access to those facilities.

The sale of Canberra airport (and others like it) has put ownership and total control of this facility into the hands of one man who certainly uses it as a personal possession, rather than a community facility. When Canberra airport was sold, the Canberra community lost its general aviation airport and general aviation is being pushed off the airfield. From a business point of view this may make economic sense, but our community loses. Australia is a huge country and general aviation has been an integral part of our proud history from the very beginning of aviation.

Canberra needs a general aviation airport that charges realistic prices (not airline landing fees and parking charges) and caters for light aviation.

I believe that there would be very strong support for a light aircraft strip at Williamsdale, both from the private sector as well as flying schools, aircraft maintenance facilities and emergency services. Certainly I would be very interested in acquiring hangerage.

Good luck with your efforts

13 FEB 04

CHRIS PRICE

PROPOSED GENERAL AVIATION AERODROME

1. Thank you for information about the proposed light aircraft aerodrome at Williamsdale, ACT.
2. I am the Certificate of Registration Holder of a CT4 aircraft - ZCT, based at Canberra Airport.

CANBERRA INTERNATIONAL AERODROME (CIA.)

3. The current situation for light aircraft operations at CIA has limitations for pilots and aircraft owners.
 - 3.1. Refuelling of aircraft is not permitted on the grass parking area. Aircraft must be taxied onto hard standarmac areas where fuel tankers are permitted to operate.
 - 3.2. Pre take off checks, including engine run ups, are required to be conducted on the ramp areas. Taxiing to runway holding points can take several minutes and may tend to nullify the safety of these checks.
 - 3.3. Day departures and arrivals are frequently delayed by heavy (airline type) movements.
 - 3.4. Circuit training is also fragmented by airline movements, to and from opposing runways, resulting in Air Traffic Control revisions

of flight path clearances to avoid potential in flight collisions.

- 3.5. Night circuit training, overflying suburbs, including Queanbeyan west and south of the runways, has attracted noise complaints from residents.
- 3.6. Parking on hard standarmac areas, in excess of two hours, attracts expensive fees.

TRALEE

4. Tralee airstrip will not be available for aircraft parking in the near future due to commercial developments on the land where the airstrip is located.

- 4.1. Tralee is located in Air Traffic Controlled airspace. A clearance is required from Canberra Tower for arrivals and departures to avoid conflict with overflying commercial and private aircraft.
- 4.2. Circuit training is not permitted.
- 4.3. The Snowy Careflight helicopter base is located close to Tralee and reserves the right over aircraft movements to and from Tralee airstrip.
- 4.4. Refueling and maintenance services are not available.

PROPOSAL

5. If the selected land at Williamsdale can be developed into a light aircraft aerodrome, it should be popular with light aircraft owners and operators.

- 5.1. Infrastructure, such as electric power, water supplies and toilet facilities could be included in the plan.

000071

- 5.2. Hangars and other support buildings would be the responsibility of those interested in aviation management.
- 5.3. Refuelling facilities could be arranged through the appropriate fuel company suppliers.
- 5.4. The aerodrome is located below and outside control airspace, therefore, no Air Traffic management, would be required. Conflicts with airline and other commercial flights will be eliminated.

SUMMARY

6. Availability of this proposed aerodrome would result in simplicity and economic advantage to light aircraft operations. Flight safety improved.
7. I endorse the proposal and where possible will be a contributor to aerodrome development and usage.

000070

Dear Chris,

If this proposal was successful, I would like an alternative to park my two aircraft VH-MCT (CT-4) & VH-ITC (C182) at a site other than the Canberra Airport being the Williamsdale airfield site. I think this would be great for Canberra and the surrounding region. Because of increasing costs of parking and usage charges at the Canberra facility, I feel it is time, affordable parking and aerodrome facilities was made available.

Regards

RE PROPOSED AIRSTRIP "WILLIAMS FALLS ACT"

I would like to locate my Airstrip
to a less controlled Airport I currently
own in SSNA RE 60. D.S.P. AND CRMAN TOWER
I.G.J.
With other clubs and organizations in
the Act I believe the Act Government
should have in providing land so the
like mind members may enjoy their
chosen interest i.e. Polo Club, BOTTING CURE
Bowling, Swimming ect ect.

I hope the new Airstrip is a public
asset and free to use.

Yours. PATTERSON.

Air Safety Solutions Pty Ltd

6 Garland Ave / PO Box 1624 Queanbeyan NSW 2620 Ph 0419 484 112 Fax/Voice mail 02 6297 1855
Email info@airsafetysolutions.com.au Internet www.airsafetysolutions.com.au ABN 73 096 570 740

Mr. Chris Price

16 February 2004

Dear Sir

GA AIRPORT FOR WILLIAMSDALE

I understand there is interest in establishing a General Aviation Airport at Williamsdale south of Canberra.

I am an aircraft owner and live in Queanbeyan. I also run a small business which services the aviation industry with seat belts, helicopter rescue equipment and such like.

Of necessity I keep my aircraft at Goulburn as Canberra Airport is not suitable for my particular type of aircraft. My aircraft is a vintage aircraft without a starter or alternator. It therefore cannot power a transponder which is essential for aircraft using Canberra Airport.

Others, particularly Ultralight Pilots, are also prevented from using Canberra because they are not allowed in Controlled Airspace. All of us thus affected would be interested in something a little closer to Canberra.

An airport catering expressly for General Aviation would be an asset to Canberra residents. Every State/Territory Capital City except Canberra and Darwin has a secondary airport and it becomes the place where affordable flying training is conducted. Industry supporting GA tends to congregate at these Secondary Airports as well.

Please feel free to use me as an example of a person who would support having a General Aviation airport at Williamsdale.

000067

Monday, 16 February 2004

Dear Chris,

Owner of Grumman-AA5.
Registration VH-ETQ

I am a female pilot who has been flying for over 10 years for recreation and thorough enjoyment. Since the change of ownership of the Canberra airport it has become increasingly more difficult to enjoy this sport in this city and have been venturing elsewhere in order to continue to fly. The cost of aircraft parking has become almost out of reach. It is quite evident that the current owner of the Canberra Airport has no interest in GA aircraft being present in any form. The question in the near future for the many GA aircraft that are parked here is where to go to for affordable parking and hangarage and outside controlled airspace which allows us to come and go at will and not be held up by commercial flights. I have had the experience of having to do as many as 13 orbits whilst waiting for commercial aircraft to land before I myself could return to the airport.

The proposal of an alternative site for GA aircraft, close to Canberra will mean the ability to fly again with none of the restrictions that are present at this point in time.

Kind Regards,



000066

Pendon Constructions Pty Ltd
A.B.N. 59 079 156 988
A.C.N. 079 156 988

PO Box 70
O'Connor ACT 2602

Phone: (02) 6257 4892
Fax: (02) 6257 4918

Email: pendonmail@austarmetro.com.au

Thursday 12 February 2004

FAXED
13/2/04
9-45am

Chris Clearihan
36 Mort Street
BRADDON ACT 2612

VIA FACSIMILE: 6257 6061

Dear Chris

PROPOSED AIRSTRIP

I have been very excited by the proposed airstrip as an alternative to the present Canberra Airport and the costs associated with using this facility.

I wish to give my support to such a proposal and you may be assured that we would support the facility with our aircraft.

Yours faithfully

Don Beaumont
Managing Director

000065

Dear Chris.

Re Williamsdale Site for
Proposed Airstrip. I would be happy to
Put my name up as a Site holder &
Pay the fees - to have an Airstrip OCTA
In the CIB. basins & traffic concept
And have my Hearty Support.

10-2-04

TOTAL P.01

February 16, 2004

000064

Mr. Chris Price

Dear Chris,

I am writing to offer my complete and enthusiastic support to your proposal to develop a light aircraft airfield at Williamsdale. As you know I currently hangar my aircraft at Goulburn, that entails a two and a half hour return trip by car. There are at least five other aircraft hanagared at Goulburn by Canberra residents and all feel as I do that we need an airfield near to Canberra which supports light aircraft. Facilities such as affordable hangarage for light aircraft at Canberra Airport are non-existent which forces me to hangar my aircraft at Goulburn and the prospect of any change to this situation in the future is very limited.

Most light aircraft owners in Canberra and surrounding district would enthusiastically support a purpose developed light aircraft facility in the ACT.

Do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of more help in your proposal.

Sincerely yours,

10 February 2004

000063

Dear Chris,

I well come your initiative to establish an airport at Williamsdale and certainly you can reserve space for our single engine aircraft IGJ.

Yours sincerely,

000062

Dear Chris,

Thanks for your letter about the proposed airstrip at Wiliamsdale.

I have several aeroplanes and would welcome an airstrip outside of the control zone where I can park them in the A.C.T.

The aeroplanes I have are listed as

I am prepared to move my aeroplanes to the new airstrip as soon as it opens.

Regards

000061

Ref: Proposed airstrip at Williamsdale in the ACT.

Dear Chris Price

I applaud you for taking on the challenge to set up an airstrip in the Canberra region. If the outcome were to be successful I would welcome the opportunity to relocate my aircraft to Williamsdale light aircraft airport.

I also believe that this movement will stimulate aviation in this region. Benefits of which are incalculable.

The existence of an airstrip in this region would also be of a benefit to the ultralight industry. The closest airstrip for ultralights in this region is Cooma or Goulburn, which is over an hour away by car. Because of this distance ultralights don't travel to the Canberra region. Therefor Canberra is missing out on tourist dollars.

Regards

000060

12 February, 2004

Dear

PROPOSED AIR STRIP IN ACT

I am very keen to re-locate my CT4 aeroplane VH-NCT on the new airstrip you have told me about outside the control zone at Williamsdale.

I am delighted with the proposal of a secure, moderately priced base airstrip within the A.C.T. and I am certain that you will be overwhelmed with interested GA pilots. It is well overdue, I am sure you will agree!

Yours sincerely,

000059

Reference: PROPOSED AIRSTRIP IN ACT.

Dear Chris,

I welcome this opportunity to re-locate my Grumman Aeroplane VH-MZJ outside the control zone at Williamsdale.

Your proposal of a secure, moderately priced base airstrip within the A.C.T. for disenfranchised private and emergency aircraft is much needed and well founded.

Regards,

000058

Chris Price

Dear Chris,

I was elated to learn about the proposed airfield at Williamsdale. A proposal that is long overdue for the Canberra region.

I know that you will be aware of the history of the Canberra International Airport and the untenable situation that now exists with regard to general aviation. It is unfortunate that such a decline in light aircraft numbers and the resultant job losses has been allowed to occur. It is also extraordinary that a major capital city, such as Canberra, does not adequately cater for general aviation. I am astounded that every other capital city in Australia is serviced with a secondary airport, where the fee structure and air traffic procedures promote general aviation, yet Canberra fails to adequately provide for the aviation community. Notwithstanding, the injection of funds into the local community from such a facility would surely justify its presence.

As an aircraft owner I applaud and welcome the establishment of an airfield at Williamsdale. I would be most interested in permanently basing my aircraft there in the future. I would also commit to building a hangar, which at a cost of some \$25,000, would be a further distribution of funds into the local trade industry.

I await with anticipation the outcome of your endeavours.

Best regards,

000057

Mr. Chris Price

11/02/2004

Reference

Proposed Airstrip at Williamsdale

Dear Chris,

Firstly I would like to thank you for efforts and time in regard to the proposal of a general aviation airstrip and or airpark at Williamsdale.

As you are well aware of the scandalous and unreasonable parking, maintenance, facility charges and restrictions of use being imposed upon the light aircraft fraternity at the Canberra so be it International airport, I welcome this proposal with enthusiasm and excitement.

I and I'm sure others would undoubtedly leap at the chance to relocate our aircraft to an adequate, secure and affordable light airpark facility in or near the ACT.

If this facility would become a reality I would not ever entertain the idea of selling my aircraft or moving from the ACT. Many owner/pilots have done so as to avoid the ridiculous costs associated with the use of a public utility that has become one mans money grabber.

This facility is well overdue and would be an asset to the ACT and region for not only the use of private aircraft but also emergency and fire control services.

Thanks and Kind Regards

000056

Chris Price

Re Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Dear Chris

I have been advised that you are considering building an airstrip and hangars at Williamsdale. I appreciate your initiative.

I am currently a part owner of a Cessna 172 that is kept at Canberra airport. It is convenient for us to use Canberra but it is also expensive. If you go ahead with the Williamsdale airfield, we would probably keep our aircraft there.

Please also include me in a list of interested airfield users.

Regards

12/2/04

000055



Australian Ultralight Federation Inc

ABN 40 070 931 645

U35/59 Wollongong St
PO Box 1265, Fyshwick ACT 2609
Ph: 02 6280 4700 Fax: 02 6280 4775

FAXED

13 February 2004

Our Ref: Admin 1

Mr. C Price

Dear Chris,

It has been brought to my attention that you are seeking expressions of interest from the Canberra aviation community in regard to an airfield situated outside controlled airspace.

The sport recreational movement is the only segment of General Aviation, which is presently expanding. The AUF has 5000 members Australia wide, however in the Canberra area our members have to travel to Cooma, Goulburn, Tumut or Holbrook to participate in their chosen sport.

Over the years our members have had ultralight fields at both Fairlight and Gundaroo, however they have been at the whim of the property owners and have in both cases run into obstacles which ultimately led to their failure. The AUF will support your efforts to the utmost of our ability.

At a personal level, I have two aircraft which I presently keep near Adaminaby and I would welcome the opportunity to have a facility a few minutes drive from home rather than dodging the kangaroos and the government pot holes in Namadgi!

Yours faithfully

Paul Middleton
Executive Director

000054

Chris Price

12/02/2004

Rc Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Chris

Thank you for the circular regarding the proposed airstrip at Williamsdale and your efforts in initiating the submission on our behalf.

I would like to add my name to your list of proposed users, for a number of reasons, firstly the constant worry of conflicts with RPT in controlled airspace. I owned Sirocco MJ5 am faced with long and tiring trips to and from Golburn as the lack of reasonable priced hangerage at Canberra is a problem and keeping an aircraft locked and secure out of unsavoury hands is an increasing problem.

Please also include me in a list of interested hanger users, I would prefer to build my own but am willing to be part of small syndicate if necessary.

Regards

C.Price

000053

I am the owner of a _____ an enclosed two seat ultralight currently hangared at Goulburn. Please include me on the list of supporters for your proposal of an airfield at Williamsdale. For me price/availabilty of hangarage would be critical in deciding whether to leave Goulburn as I am retired and cannot afford the costs routinely borne by GA owners.

000052

Chris Price

Re: Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Dear Chris

I would like to add my support to your proposal to the ACT Government to develop a General Aviation and Emergency Services airstrip.

I believe a recreational airport is greatly needed for the Canberra area. As a member of the Australian Ultralight Federation, I am keenly aware of the increasing popularity of recreational flying. At present myself and many of my flying colleagues are forced to travel extensive distances to fly our aircraft. Consequently, I have recently disposed of my Sapphire Ultralight Airplane having become dissatisfied with needing to travel to and from Goulburn Airport. As a local businessman I haven't the time to travel 2 hours to fly my plane and feel that my valuable asset ought to be hangered in a secure location.

I would be very interested to hanger my new aircraft at your proposed site. I would also be interested to build a hanger on site for this purpose.

I would be grateful if you would keep me updated on this proposal.

Yours faithfully

000051

Chris Price

Re Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Chris

Thank you for the circular regarding the proposed airstrip at Williamsdale and your efforts in initiating the submission on our behalf.

I would like to add my name to your list of proposed users, for a number of reasons, firstly the constant worry of conflicts with RPT in controlled airspace, I own two aircraft a Jabiru and a Veenstra SV11, and am faced with long and tiring trips to and from Goulburn as the lack of reasonable priced hangerage at Canberra is a problem and keeping an aircraft locked and secure out of unsavoury hands is an increasing problem.

Please also include me in a list of interested hanger users, I would prefer to build my own but am willing to be part of a small syndicate if necessary.

regards

000050

RECREATIONAL AIRFIELD

Dear Chris,

19th February, 2004

I have heard you are trying to organise a recreational field out at Williamsdale. I would like to register my interest.

I am an Ultralight pilot, and I fly a Sapphire, which is in the 95.10 category. I am also building a Zenith XL. I am not licensed to, and I cannot afford to, fly from the Canberra airport.

I need somewhere local to keep my 'plane and fly it at a recreational cost. If I could get a suitable lease (20 years plus) I would like to participate in the building of a group hanger, or put up my own hanger of an appropriate commercial standard.

The present situation is ridiculous - there is just nowhere in the Canberra region for recreational aviators. I travel to The Oaks near Sydney every Saturday to fly. I have met many people in Canberra who would like to get involved in ultralight aviation, but cannot because there is no ultralighting activity in the Canberra region. Some travel to and have 'planes at Goulburn, some travel to Cooma, and many others just do not start.

I would be very interested in hearing of any developments, and I wish you all the best in your endeavour.

000049

Chris Price

Re Proposed airstrip at Williamsdale

Dear Chris,

I have just received your letter via

I have almost finished building a CH 701 and have been looking desperately for a location to base my plane. Your proposal for an airstrip at Williamsdale would be a great solution for myself and I am sure for many other pilots.

I would be interested in building or being part of a group to build a hanger on site.

Yours sincerely

000048

Mr Chris Price

Dear Chris

I would be very keen to both use the airstrip and hangar my microlight at Williamsdale if this facility is developed.

I have found the lack of affordable, secure facilities close to Canberra to be a real problem in the past.

Your initiative is to be applauded.

Yours sincerely

FAXED
18/2/04

000047

18th February 2004

Mr Jon Stanhope, MLA
Chief Minister,
ACT Legislative Assembly,
GPO Box 1020 Canberra, 2601

cc: Mr Chris Price

Re: Grass Airstrip Proposal, Williamsdale

Dear Mr Stanhope,

I write to indicate my support for the current initiatives being undertaken by the A.C.T. Government to establish a recreational aviation facility within the A.C.T..

My partner and I own two aircraft: a Grumman AA1B 'Trainer' and a Kolb 'Firestar 2' ultralight. Unfortunately there is nowhere within a reasonable distance that we are able to base the ultralight, and it languishes in a hanger in northern Victoria. You are probably that there are no locations at all within – or readily accessible from – the A.C.T. for light sport aircraft and other aircraft not carrying radar transponders. This is a severe limitation on the population of the ACT and surrounding districts, and efforts to address the situation need to be closely examined.

I am a member of the Canberra Aero Club, Australian Ultralight Federation and the Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association. My interests are purely recreational, and I fly in the order of 100-120 hours per annum.

The current initiative sponsored by Mr Price seems to be very comprehensive and will fill the requirements of a significant proportion of those interested in recreational aviation, from aero-modelers, through to light sport aircraft and perhaps some of the gliding fraternity (particularly hang gliders). I do accept that environmental noise considerations may be raised at the prospect of the new facility, but with careful crafting of operational guidelines it has been shown in other locations that recreational aircraft and rurally-based residents can co-exist.

In no way does my support for the current proposal denigrate the impressive efforts of Canberra International Airport – indeed my Grumman has been based there for the past six years. However, it is easily accepted that recreational aviators (particularly ultralights) do not readily mix with General and Commercial aviation.

Your enthusiastic support for Mr Price's initiative would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

00004618th February 2004

Mr Brendan Smyth, MLA
Leader of the Opposition,
ACT Legislative Assembly,
GPO Box 1020 Canberra, 2601

cc: Mr Chris Price,

Re: Grass Airstrip Proposal, Williamsdale

Dear Mr Smyth,

Your party's support of initiatives being undertaken by the A.C.T. Government to establish a recreational aviation facility within the A.C.T. is sought on my behalf.

My partner and I own two aircraft: a Grumman AA1B 'Trainer' and a Kolb 'Firestar 2' ultralight. Unfortunately there is nowhere within a reasonable distance that we are able to base the ultralight, and it languishes in a hanger in northern Victoria. You are probably that there are no locations at all within – or readily accessible from – the A.C.T. for light sport aircraft and other aircraft not carrying radar transponders. This is a severe limitation on the population of the ACT and surrounding districts, and efforts to address the situation need to be closely examined.

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In no way does my support for the current proposal denigrate the impressive efforts of Canberra International Airport – indeed my Grumman has been based there for the past six years. However, it is easily accepted that recreational aviators (particularly ultralights) do not readily mix with General and Commercial aviation.

I have written to the Chief Minister seeking his support, and the enthusiastic support of the Opposition for Mr Price's initiative would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

000045

RE: Grass airfield OCTA in Canberra.

Chris,

I am very pleased to hear of your negotiations to try and establish an airfield for recreational flying in the Canberra region.

I would definitely support this proposal and would regularly make use of such a facility when it eventuates.

It has been necessary for me to trailer my aircraft well outside the Canberra region in order to enjoy my passion which is aviation. If I were to have access to an airfield close by my home I would appreciate the opportunity to fly with other like minded aviators regularly.

Please keep up the great work and if there is anything I can do to assist you in this proposal, do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards and thanks,

'92 C Price
FAX

Chris, About the first letter
regarding operating from Williamsburg,
I used to operate my powered
parachute at MCCARTHY station, a
bit south of Michelago, and
operated it from my place (and
others) as Bevra.

I was not ~~too~~ popular with
some because of the noise and
if I was low it scared some
stock, especially cattle.

I stopped in '95 when we
moved here and I sold the
aircraft.

Operated without radio.

Don't think this is any use to
you but let me know if you
need any more info.

000043

ATTENION CHRIS PRICE
RE; PROPOSED AUIRPORT AT WILLIAMSDALE

DEAR CHRIS

I WOULD LIKE TO VOICE MY SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED AIRPORT AT WILLIAMSDALE AS I LEARNER PILOT I FIND BEING SURROUNDED BY LARGE JET AIRCRAFT TO BE VERY DICOMFORTING, LET ALLONE THE POSSIBILLITY OF HAVING INTERNATIONAL AIRCRAFT SHARING THE AREA.

THERE IS NOTHING WORST THEN HIRING AN AIRCAFT AND INSTRUCTOR AND SPENDING YOU TIME STUCK WAITING ON THE GROUND DUE TO AIRLINE AIRCRAFT.

THE PROPOSED AIRPORT WOULD REDUCE DELAYS AND HOLD UP THUS INCREASING SAFETY.

ALSO I WOULD DUE TO THE REDUCED PRICES OF HANGER'S BE REACCESS MY POSITION ON ~~BUYING A PLANE.~~

REGARDS

000042

February 16, 2004

[REDACTED]

RE: Proposed Airstrip at Williamsdale.

Dear Chris,

Thanks for your thoughts in considering me in your proposal for an airstrip at Williamsdale. I think it is a great idea.

We all know since the privatization of Canberra Airport and it becoming an international venue the cost would and has escalated beyond the affordability of the general aviation industry. This is a sad but true consequence.

Canberra needs a general aviation airstrip and I would support it 100% and encourage your proposal before this hobby, lifestyle and industry is lost, and I the long hard road of bureaucracy does not consume all you energy.

[REDACTED]
Best of luck.

[REDACTED]

000041

13th February 2004

Chris Price

Williamsdale Airstrip

Dear Chris,

I would like to offer my support for your proposal for an Airstrip at Williamsdale. There is more than a need for more affordable hangarage in the Canberra area and outside Controlled Airspace. I am not fortunate enough to have an aircraft of my own, but Williamsdale would be much more convenient for me than travelling to Goulburn to fly. I feel that the present ownership of Canberra Airport, does not have aircraft of private ownership on their agenda at all, and if a suitable location can get up and going before GA is pushed out altogether, the more successful the relocation would be.

Regards and success in your endeavour,

000040

Chris Price

Re Proposed Williamsdale Airstrip

Dear Chris

It is indeed very exciting news about the proposed airstrip at Williamsdale.

A really great idea to have an airstrip outside controlled airspace, which would enable me to have hangerage at a reasonable cost close to Canberra.

Unfortunately ,we had to sell our historic aircraft because of the exorbitant Costs of hangerage at Canberra airport.

Regards,

000039

To: Mr Chris Price

19 Feb 2004

Chris,

I just got a letter from the AUF office advising that you are pursuing a grass airfield near Williamsdale. What a damn fine idea to say the least. I usually fly ultralights at Holbrook which has great facilities and airspace, but is a long commute from Canberra. The commute makes the driving time to flying time ratio undesirable and requiring an all day or overnight trip to get some good flying time.

I don't know what your plan is for number and length of runways, hangarage, landing fees, if aircraft will be available for hire, if there will be a flood of GA that will take up the place, flying limitations due to noise (eg circuit heights and times etc.), etc. But a flying facility close to Canberra would be fantastic and would be keen to use it.

If you have any more info I can be contacted on

Good luck with your proposal and I look forward to getting the facility open and doing some local flying.

000038

18th February 2004

Mr C. Price

Dear Chris,

Ref: Grass airfield OCTA in Canberra

It has been brought to my attention that you have been lobbying the ACT Government for the establishment of a grass airfield near Williamsdale on the Monaro Highway.

Congratulations on taking this initiative, I believe this is a much needed facility in the ACT and will be used by many Ultralight and GA pilots in the Canberra region including myself.

I am a flying member of the AUF.

All the best with your efforts Chris.

000037

Mr Chris Price

Ref: Grass airfield OCTA in Canberra.

Dear Chris,

It was a pleasure to read your letter care of the AUF. About 2 years ago I made inquiries regarding Ultralight training in the ACT. I subscribed to the AUF magazine and took to contacting names from the ACT region. After fixing my mind on affordable powered flight it was disheartening to discover that no local facility existed.

For some time I had contemplated travelling to Goulburn to learn and hire an ultralight, but considered the additional time and expense to pursue this ambition beyond my financial means.

I am not an ultralight owner or pilot, however, may I extend any assistance that could support your exciting proposal.

Yours sincerely

18 February 2004

000036

Mr Chris Price

Dear Chris:

Apropos a letter I have received from the AUF, indicating that you plan to develope an airstrip near Williamsdale for use by GA and AUF flying, I certainly will consider using the facility, given that it should be suitable to my needs.

Sincerely,

000035

Dunshaw Electrical Services

Licensed Electrical Contractor

License Number C635

Phone 0412 632778 Fax 02 6257 8181

ABN 57 097 299 306

PO BOX 718 DICKSON 2602

REF: PROPOSED AIRSTRIP AT WILLAMSDALE IN THE ACT

Dear Sir

I am in full support of the proposed airstrip at Willamsdale and do feel that it will be of great benefit to the aviation community as well as the general Community in Canberra .

This proposed airstrip would benefit the ultra light movement as well as the General Aviation Community this proposal is long overdue and I can only say I applaud everyone involved.

Yours Faithfully

/Paul Duncan

000034

Proposal
for
Airfield Facility
at
Williamsdale

Christopher Price

The Honorable John Stanhope MLA
Chief Minister
ACT Legislative Assembly
London Circuit
CIVIC ACT 2600

Dear Chief Minister,

In September of 2003 I met with you as part of a delegation, led by Mr Trevor Kaine, which discussed the need for development of a separate General Aviation airfield in the ACT. You were kind enough to express an interest in our concerns and invited us to develop a substantive proposal which your Government could consider.

As you would be aware, Mr Kaine has since suffered ill-health and has not been able to progress this matter. However, I have developed a low-cost proposal which would meet the concerns of the GA community and which I believe has a number of significant benefits for the ACT, not least of which is that it provides a base for emergency services aerial operations which is outside of controlled airspace and which is of interest to New South Wales Emergency Services operations. Indeed, this proposal will reinforce and assist both NSW and the ACT in delivering on the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding on cross-border coordination of Emergency Services.

Development of an alternative GA facility outside of controlled airspace will be extremely attractive to the local GA community, whose presence on Canberra International Airport has dwindled considerably over the past 5 years as the airport has focused more on development of the airport as a national and international air hub and as a business destination. Based on Canberra International Airport's own projected figures for airport usage, development of an alternative facility has the potential to remove up to 40 000 light aircraft approach/departures per year, from Canberra International Airport. This would both extend the effective life of Canberra International Airport, slowing the need for the airport to develop additional infrastructure to handle increased flight operations, and remove the source of many of the noise complaints which are generated by low flying single- and twin-engined piston aircraft undertaking flying training circuits over central and North Canberra.

The proposal is outlined in greater detail in the attached pages. In summary, it involves developing a 1200 metre grass airstrip at Williamsdale adjacent to the Monaro Highway. This site has a number of advantages over those sites identified as potential alternative airport sites in the numerous studies conducted over the past thirty years. It is ideal for flight training operations, unlike those at nearby sites such as Angle Crossing, Guises Flat and Reedy Creek identified in the Maunsell McIntyre review completed in 2001, which were identified as having significant constraints. Possibly two thirds of the land identified is, I understand, already held by Government (a recreation reserve and a traveling stock reserve), minimising the requirement to obtain additional land.

000032

It is a generally level site, minimising the need for earthworks. It is outside of controlled airspace, minimising any conflict with Regular Passenger Transport operating out of Canberra International Airport and making it ideal for pilot training and emergency services operations. There are few residences in the area, reducing the community impact of General Aviation activities at the existing airport. And it is adjacent to the Monaro Highway, providing excellent access and making the site easily and quickly accessible to ACT and regional residents.

The proposal provides for an initial facility developed at very low cost by benchmark aviation facility standards. The preliminary Business Case indicates that the facility would become self-funding within the first year, and would provide a strong basis for further development over time without requiring additional Government assistance.

I believe that I have developed the proposal sufficiently to establish that there is a genuine and affordable option for development of an alternative GA facility in the ACT, which provides the basis for additional detailed work by your Government.

I also believe that there is a genuine need for this development, which is outlined in the attached proposal. I would be happy to meet with yourself or with ACT Government officers to discuss the proposal further. I can be contacted on

Yours sincerely

Chris Price

January 2004

DEVELOPMENT OF A GENERAL AVIATION AIRFIELD

Need for a separate General Aviation facility in the ACT

Despite the disruptions created by the withdrawal of Impulse Airlines and the collapse of Ansett, domestic air traffic growth continues to grow steadily and creates increasing pressures on our existing aviation facilities. This growth is taking place in Regular Public Transport (RPT) operations, commercial General Aviation (GA) operations (charter, freight and commercial operations such as aerial surveying) and in private or recreational GA activities. Within the foreseeable future Canberra International Airport will also become a normal point of entry into Australia for international aircraft, something that is long overdue, which the management of the airport is obviously seeking and which will have great financial benefit to the A.C.T., but which will have an even bigger impact on GA operations.

Canberra International Airport's projections indicate that it will reach ultimate capacity for numbers of aircraft landings and departures in its current operating configuration by 2050. Whilst there are several assumptions in this (growth in demand for aviation services, size and operating characteristics of aircraft available, hours of operation, community attitude to aircraft noise and so on), Canberra will eventually face capacity constraints on its operations. When this happens the increased pressure of traffic (commercial aircraft movements) and increases in the already high levels of security will effectively preclude general aircraft operations such as training, light domestic charter and private operators.

Prior to privatisation Canberra Airport (as it was then) hosted over one hundred and fifty light aircraft and the office of the company which manufactures the training and light military transport aircraft for the Australian Defence Force, Pilatus. This number has decreased considerably, my most recent count showing just 38 light aircraft parked on the grass and hard-base areas. This would not include those aircraft temporarily off-airport and those being serviced, but confirms anecdotal evidence and my own personal experience that Canberra International Airport continues to become increasingly unattractive to light aircraft owners. In addition, Pilatus has moved to South Australia and the South Care emergency service helicopters, which were originally based at the airport, have since moved elsewhere.

Recreational light aircraft owners have other options, ranging from Tralee landing strip (within Canberra's Controlled Airspace) to Goulburn airport, about an hour by road from Canberra.

However, commercial operations and in particular, flight training operations, are finding it increasingly difficult to operate from Canberra International Airport. From six organisations offering flying training five years ago Canberra has reduced to two recently. This is not just a loss of businesses, it is also a loss of jobs, flow-on activities such as aircraft servicing, engineering and sales, and not least the flying training basis for much of tomorrow's commercial aviation sectors.

Security concerns are also impacting on the GA industry. At present the security at Canberra International Airport *in the terminal* is of a relative high standard. However it is common practice for GA operators to punch in a code at one of the entry gates and to have free access to the non-terminal areas of the airport. Whilst the codes are changed on a regular basis, those people to whom the code is issued are not subject to any security checks and in any case

within a few days the new codes are common knowledge.

I do not believe that the present system is adequate now, and when international flights into Canberra become regular events it will be totally inappropriate. In any event, developing security concerns at the national level indicate that it will become increasingly difficult for GA aircraft to operate from major commercial airports.

No doubt the industry will accommodate to these structural changes and will cope. However, whilst this represents a threat to local GA activity and training it also presents an opportunity which Canberra could, at minimal cost, address and at the same time provide for the needs of the local GA community.

All other Australian capital cities have both major RPT airports and GA airports, the latter established as cities grew in size and RPT came to dominate the main air entry port. Canberra is the only exception, which on its own suggests that as other major cities have long found it necessary to establish alternative facilities for GA operations, Canberra would be wise to make similar provision whilst it is still possible.

A more pertinent point in favour of developing our own GA facility, however, is that many of the capital city airports, including the GA airports, are becoming increasingly busy and crowded. Bankstown Airport handles most of Sydney's GA traffic (both commercial and private) and is Australia's *busiest* airport.

A new facility developed in the ACT will have a natural market which can be expected to grow steadily. The attached business plan (Appendix 'A') uses conservative assumptions based on local aircraft ownership and operation to demonstrate that a local GA airfield will become self-supporting within the first year. It does not take account of growth from activities that will flow to the airfield from other GA facilities, most particularly in the Sydney basin but also from further a field. A list of GA aircraft owners within 80 km of Canberra is at Appendix 'B'.

A GA airfield in the ACT will have the advantages of both access to a major city and relatively easy operations outside of controlled airspace. Whilst this is unlikely to be useful to private aircraft owners in, say, Sydney (they would still have to travel here to access their aircraft) it would be attractive for light aircraft maintenance and servicing operations, training, certain manufacturing operations, for example ultra light aircraft, aircraft sales and other aviation related activities.

I would suggest that Government could commission a relatively inexpensive survey to confirm the demand for a GA facility in the ACT, to provide an alternative basis for development of the business case for the facility.

Possible sites for a General Aviation Airfield

Ideally, a general aviation airfield would be situated outside of controlled airspace with good access by sealed road and with utilities readily available. It would also be in an area which has low population and be able to operate with minimum impact on existing residential developments.

Maunsell MacIntyre was commissioned by the A.C.T. Government to examine options for alternative airport sites within the ACT. That study, completed in 2001, was essentially a review of studies going back over the last thirty years or more of alternative *GA airport sites* in and around the ACT.

It eliminated all but four sites. These were the CSIRO site north of Fraser and west of the Barton Highway, Murryong on the road to Bungendore, Reedy Creek south of Tharwa and west of the Monaro Highway, and Uriarra 2, west of the Murumbidgee River immediately east of Uriarra Road and the rural property Huntly.

All of these sites have problems of one sort or another which would need to be resolved if development were to take place.

There is, however, a potential site not identified in the report - nor in the studies on which the report was based - which is a reasonable alternative. This area is at Williamsdale, to the north of the service station on the intersection of the Monaro Highway and Angle Crossing Road and west of the highway (Appendix 'C').

The proposed airstrip would commence at the southern boundary of the Williamsdale Recreational Reserve (The abandoned tennis courts etc.), running north from a point at 35.34.4 south and 149.07.3 east at an angle of 350 degrees true for a distance of 1100metres with a width of 250 metres west of the current fence line adjacent to the Monaro Highway.

This site is outside of controlled airspace, well clear of the commercial RPT routes. The controlled airspace 'step' is 4500 feet above the site, enabling GA aircraft more than ample operating space without impinging on controlled space (Appendix 'D').

Sites such as Reedy Creek and Uriarra 2 have problems with adjacent hills creating turbulence which make them inappropriate for inexperienced pilots (i.e. training operations). There are no such impediments to operations in the Williamsdale option. Further, as the correspondence from Mr. Peter Coburn, Airservices Australia's national manager for Airspace and Military Liaison confirms (Appendix 'E'), the site presents no impediments or restrictions in relation to airspace management requirements.

Costs of the development

The indicative land requirements are Block 52 Tuggeranong (recreation reserve), Block 1516 Tuggeranong (travelling stock reserve) and Block 1482 Tuggeranong (rural lease). With care in the design, the recreation reserve building and facilities could be repositioned on the proposed site and could benefit from additional patronage associated with the GA airstrip activity.

It is anticipated that all of Block 1482 would need to be resumed, to allow space for 'value adding' activities such as fly-ins, antique and historical aircraft displays and possible industrial developments, as well as the eventual development of a cross runway. Presumably the cost of such resumption will depend on the terms and conditions of the lease and, as these are not known, no cost has been estimated for this.

Sites such as Murryong and Uriarra 2 would require significant and costly earthworks to prepare an 1100 metre airstrip surface. Williamsdale, on the other hand, is comparatively

level. A preliminary quotation for the leveling and preparation of the area has been obtained and is attached (Appendix 'H'), indicating a cost of \$300 000.

Prudence and modern security requires that the site be fenced. The cost of fencing the area with 1.8 metre high chain wire security fencing is \$17.00 per metre. This figure is based on verbal quotations obtained from three independent sources, all of which have stated that the cost per metre may reduce depending on the length of fence required. On this basis, total cost for fencing an 1100 metre by 250 metre area would be of the order of \$50 000. If all of Block 1482 is included in the fencing, the cost may be around \$10 000 more.

It is understood that the Commonwealth is extending its perimeter security requirements to a greater range of airport and regional airfields. Given the proximity of the Williamsdale site to Canberra (one of the commercial strengths of the proposal) the Commonwealth may require additional security such as 2 metre fencing with a barbed wire 'Y' top. It is, however, also understood that the Commonwealth may provide dollar-for-dollar funding which could actually lead to a decrease in the cost of fencing.

Major additional capital costs would be provision of an administration building (particularly if there are security concerns), a toilet block, fire safety equipment and lawn mowing equipment. A simple administration block with attached toilet facility is expected to be in the vicinity of \$50 000. Lawn mowing equipment would be a tractor with mower attachment, slasher and backhoe for simple airstrip maintenance, and could be obtained for under \$20 000. Fire safety equipment would be minimal, particularly as a manned on-airport fire safety presence is not required for airports flying less than 35 000 passengers per annum.

There are several ways in which these latter costs can be contained. The Airport Flying School (AFS) is seeking an alternative Canberra-based location for its activities (flying training and aircraft charter) and has indicated its interest in re-locating to Williamsdale, should it be developed. The AFS would relocate its existing administration building from Canberra International Airport to the Williamsdale site and, in return for waiving of site rental, provide the administration for the airfield (access and security control, collection of landing fees and aircraft parking charges and so on). A letter of intent from the owner of the Airport Flying School, Mr Jeff Reed, is at Appendix 'F'.

Whilst purchase of a tractor and equipment would serve a number of purposes, these costs could initially be shifted to operating cost by contracting the ACT Government's own grass mowing service to provide grass strip maintenance, and employing other contractors to provide strip maintenance, which is expected to be minimal.

The other cost is establishment of the grass strip, which would require seeding and watering for initial establishment. Quotes have not been sought but it is estimated that the cost would not exceed \$10 000.

Demand for a GA facility

A detailed business case has been prepared and is attached (Appendix 'A').

Some indication of the demand-side underpinning such a facility can be obtained from an understanding of the local General Aviation environment. Prior to privatisation of Canberra

airport, there were approximately 150 GA aircraft based on the airport. Allowing for some 30 of these to be in commercial operations, this indicates that around 120 private aircraft operated out of Canberra.

The Maunsell McIntyre Site Selection Study, completed in 2001, estimated that there were then some 80 GA aircraft on the airport. A recent count showed 38 aircraft parked on the airport during a weekday, a time when use of private aircraft could be expected to be low. Including aircraft in hangarage, being serviced or undertaking commercial operations the number of GA based at the airport would be between 70 and 80, but with a shift towards commercial GA.

A count of GA aircraft whose owners live within 80 km of Canberra indicates that there are some 161 GA aircraft, not counting gliders and ultralights. This provides the private-use base for the estimates of patronage for the proposed GA facility.

From this base, conservative estimates of early adoption and take-up rates have been used to build the business case. Sensitivity analysis has been conducted on 30% plus and minus on aircraft numbers, which indicate that the business case is robust. At 89% of the (conservative) base-case aircraft number assumptions, break-even occurs in year 3, whilst at 70% of the base-case numbers, break-even occurs in year 4.

Cost is a large part of the reason why aircraft owners have departed. Prior to privatisation, the Federal Airports Corporation charged \$680 per tonne for parking on hardstand (concrete) and this included parking at Canberra, Bankstown and Camden. All parking charges provide unlimited use rights - that is, take-off and landing fees are included in the annual fee. However, the airport owners are seeking to obtain a commercial return on their investment, and aircraft parking is not the best and highest use to which airport land can be put. Annual parking fees for a grass site at the airport was \$1420 per tonne (or around \$2000 for the average single engined aircraft) in 2003.

In addition, landings in controlled airspace (eg Canberra International Airport) attract a \$9.60 per tonne approach fee for air traffic control. This does not apply outside of controlled air space.

The fees proposed for Williamsdale are flat fees, rather than cost-per-tonne, and would vary with aircraft type - ie ultralight, single engine GA and twin engine GA. Again, it would include unlimited take-off and landing rights, and Wuilliamsdale is outside of controlled airspace.

The figures used to estimate demand and revenues are conservative, and do not include activities such as glider operations, commercial servicing activities, light industrial such as ultralight manufacturing, special-events such as fly-ins, historic and war-birds displays and so on.

The cost factors used in the business case assume that the GA facility is set up as a commercial operation. However, if the option of using the Airport Flying School for administration of the facility in the early years, the capital cost of developing the facility is reduced by conservatively \$45 000, the administration cost is reduced by \$38 676 and on the base case, break-even is achieved in year 1.

Firefighting and Emergency Services

A major rationale for the ACT Government to develop this facility is that it can contribute significantly to enhancing the region's aerial fire-fighting capability.

At present, the ACT operates rotary-wing aircraft (helicopters) for fire-fighting activities. I understand that Emergency Services is co-locating some of its activities with the Southcare facility near Hume, including development of helicopter facilities. Whilst helicopters can operate from areas where fixed-wing aircraft cannot, this site is still within controlled air space and operations within controlled airspace have to fit within other activities taking place, including RPT operations. This leads to some delays.

It is not proposed to relocate the Southcare helicopter service or the Emergency Services helicopter activities to Williamsdale, although this remains an option. However, discussions with Yarrowlumla / Queanbeyan District NSW Rural Fire Service indicate a strong interest in basing one or more of their fixed-wing fire-fighting aircraft at that facility (Appendix 'G'). This would significantly increase the local aerial fire-fighting capability, particularly in the less accessible areas where fires affecting Canberra often originate. I understand that the ACT and NSW have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding relating to bushfires, and this would be a rapid and significant step on the part of the ACT to delivering on that Memorandum of Understanding and helping to increase the ACT's bushfire preparedness.

Ownership structure

The ACT Government is being asked to resume land for the development and to fund the initial construction. Returns are expected to exceed the costs of operating the facility from about year 2 onwards, and in the longer term will fund further developments (bitumenising the runway, runway lighting, provision of hangars for commercial lease and so forth).

A major reason for the ACT Government to develop the facility is its capability to provide emergency service operations - particularly firefighting - for the region. This operational capability is increased by hardening the runway and making it capable of night operations, providing a 24-hour aerial fire-fighting capability, out of the ongoing operating profits of the airfield.

From this perspective GA operations help defray, and in fact largely fund, the ACT and region's aerial emergency services capability.

It is assumed that the ACT Government will not want to, and would have some difficulty in, releasing the facility to a non-government body. It is therefore suggested that the Government acquires the necessary land, undertakes the preliminary development and puts in place a management structure overseen by a joint Government-industry board. The exact structure would need to be developed in detail, but I believe that there are a number of models of Government-private sector cooperation which could be adapted to this purpose.

Issues

The major issues are ownership and aircraft noise.

Ownership has been dealt with above. The ACT Government is fully justified in developing the facility on the grounds of emergency-preparedness alone, and the day-to-day use of the facility by private sector GA operators simply helps offset the establishment cost and to fund ongoing development of the facility. In addition, development of the separate GA facility is a strategic move taking into account the continued development of Canberra International Airport.

The noise issue is a matter of trade-offs. Whilst development of the facility would introduce aircraft noise into a new environment, it would remove (eventually) up to 40 000 GA aircraft movements from Canberra airport itself, and relieve North Canberra in particular of a major source of noise complaints. By contrast, GA operations at Williamsdale would affect a much smaller number of residents and, by careful design of circuits (eg only allowing circuits to the west) would have little impact even there.

Preliminary examination of the site indicates the presence of some Yellow Box Red Gum, which is an endangered species but which could be largely avoided, and about 6 mature pine trees which would need to be removed to establish flight path clearance zones. There is no information on other endangered species, nor on Aboriginal artefact sites. However, the proposed site has been extensively used for recreational and agricultural purposes.

Next steps

The Maunsell McIntyre study convened a stakeholders group which identified the criteria embodying the requirements for a desirable site:

- Stabilised grass strip 1 000metres by 50 metres NE to SW;
- Access to circuit area;
- Daytime operations, with possibility of future night operations;
- Potential for provision of hangar space and aircraft parking (the Williamstown site offers a basic potential for 180 aircraft parking spaces or a somewhat reduced number in hangars);
- Suitably remote to minimise problems relating to aircraft noise;
- Outside of controlled airspace;
- Within 20 minutes (ideally) of Canberra city centre;
- Sealed (public) road access;
- Up to licensed aerodrome standard;
- Open grassed area suitable for cross strip landing minimum of 200 metres (Block 1482 provides for a possible 600 metre cross strip);
- Suitable area to allow for future possible expansion (Block 1482);
- Ability to obtain the domestic type water supply (unknown), power up to 11 kV (on-site), mobile and desirably land line phone coverage;
- Sewerage not necessary;

- Fuel provided initially by tanker with possibility for future storage tanks on-site; and
- Suitable facilities for social activities (the proposal would include re-development of the recreation reserve facilities).

I believe that the proposal meets all of the above criteria and has been developed in sufficient detail to warrant further investigation by Government. I consider that the next steps should be:

- Professional examination of the proposed site to establish that it meets all of the air operation and safety requirements, including a possible primary usage for flight training;
- Following this, professional, independent development of a business plan to indicate the accuracy or otherwise of the draft business plan provided with this proposal; and
- Subject to favourable outcomes to the above two studies, undertaking of an Environmental Impact Statement.

List of Appendices

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Appendix 'A' | Business Projections with sensitivity analysis |
| Appendix 'B' | List of Aircraft within 80klms of Canberra |
| Appendix 'C' | Topographical map of area |
| Appendix 'D' | Visual Navigation Chart Canberra area |
| Appendix 'E' | Supporting Letter from Air Services |
| Appendix 'F' | Supporting Letter from Airport Flying School |
| Appendix 'G' | Supoorting Letter from NSW Rural Fire Services |
| Appendix 'H' | Quotation for Site earthworks |

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Williamsdale Airfield Business Plan Sensitivity Projection - Anticipated activity

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Revenue					
Landing Fees	3972	6114	8256	12768	17676
Overnight Parking	975	1476	2010	2670	3720
Hangarage Ground Rent - Private	0	0	5400	14400	18000
Hangarage Ground Rent - Commercial	0	0	6000	12000	18000
Fuel Sales Profit	10116	12914	14779	21365	24262
Aircraft Parking	24800	32800	38800	67680	84000
Sponsorships	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Total Revenue	54863	68304	90245	145883	180658
Expenditure					
Administrative Salary	36400	36400	38220	38220	41277
Superannuation SGC	3276	3276	3440	3440	3715
Field Maintenance - Runway	2400	2400	2400	7200	17500
Field Maintenance - Security	750	750	750	1250	1250
Light, Heat & Power	1800	2160	2400	3600	3600
Telephones	3000	3300	3630	4800	5200
Advertising & Promotion	9000	6000	6000	12000	12000
Printing & Stationery & Postage	3000	1500	1800	2400	300
Fire and Safety Services	600	600	600	1000	1000
Cleaning	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Sewerage	500	500	500	1000	1000
Refuse Costs	1400	1400	1400	2100	2100
Insurance	15000	15000	15000	24000	24000
Legal & Professional costs	2400	1200	2400	1200	1200
Rent	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Renewals	1200	1500	1800	2400	3000
Licences & Fees	2000				
Total Expenditure	84226	77486	81840	106110	118642
Nett Profit/(Loss)	-29364	-9183	8405	39773	62016

Williamsdale Airfield Business Plan Sensitivity Projection - Anticipated activity & Charge Rates

Itinerant Landing Fees

	U/light	U/Rate	S	S/Rate	T	T/Rate Scale	
2005	180	3	520	6	26	12	100
2006	270	3	780	6	52	12	
2007	360	3	1040	6	78	12	
2008	720	3	1560	6	104	12	
2009	900	3	2080	6	208	12	

Overnight Parking Charges

	U/light	U/Rate	S	S/Rate	T	T/Rate	
2005	45	3	130	6	5	12	100
2006	62	3	195	6	10	12	
2007	90	3	260	6	15	12	
2008	180	3	315	6	20	12	
2009	300	3	420	6	25	12	

Hangarage Ground Rent

	Private		Commercial		100
	M2	Rate	M2	Rate	
2005	400	0	400	0	
2006	800	0	800	0	
2007	1200	4.5	800	7.5	
2008	1600	9	800	15	
2009	2000	9	1200	15	

Fuel Sales Nett Margin

	U/light	Av/L	Rate	P/Ac	Av/L	Rate	Comm Av/L	Rate	Itinerant Av/L	Rate	Scale
2005	5	600	0.05	21	1750	0.05	7	17000	0.05	363	120 0.05
2006	10	600	0.05	25	1750	0.05	8	17800	0.05	551	120 0.05
2007	20	600	0.05	30	1750	0.05	8	17800	0.05	739	120 0.05
2008	25	600	0.05	43	1750	0.05	10	19400	0.05	1192	120 0.05
2009	30	600	0.05	53	1750	0.05	10	19400	0.05	1504	120 0.05

Aircraft Parking

	U/light	U/rate	S	S/rate	T	T/Rate	
2005	5	400	24	800	3	1200	100
2006	10	400	30	800	4	1200	
2007	15	400	35	800	4	1200	
2008	20	480	50	960	7	1440	
2009	25	480	60	960	10	1440	

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Business Plan Sensitivity Projection - Anticipated activity minus 30%

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Revenue					
Landing Fees	2780	4280	5779	8938	12373
Overnight Parking	683	1033	1407	1869	2604
Hangarage Ground Rent - Private	0	0	3780	10080	12600
Hangarage Ground Rent - Commercial	0	0	4200	8400	12600
Fuel Sales Profit	7081	9039	10345	14955	16983
Aircraft Parking	17360	22960	27160	47376	58800
Sponsorships	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Total Revenue	42904	52312	67672	106618	130960
Expenditure					
Administrative Salary	36400	36400	38220	38220	41277
Superannuation SGC	3276	3276	3440	3440	3715
Field Maintenance - Runway	2400	2400	2400	7200	17500
Field Maintenance - Security	750	750	750	1250	1250
Light, Heat & Power	1800	2160	2400	3600	3600
Telephones	3000	3300	3630	4800	5200
Advertising & Promotion	9000	6000	6000	12000	12000
Printing & Stationery & Postage	3000	1500	1800	2400	300
Fire and Safety Services	600	600	600	1000	1000
Cleaning	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Sewerage	500	500	500	1000	1000
Refuse Costs	1400	1400	1400	2100	2100
Insurance	15000	15000	15000	24000	24000
Legal & Professional costs	2400	1200	2400	1200	1200
Rent	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Renewals	1200	1500	1800	2400	3000
Licences & Fees	2000				
Total Expenditure	84226	77486	81840	106110	118642
Nett Profit/(Loss)	-41322	-25174	-14168	508	12318

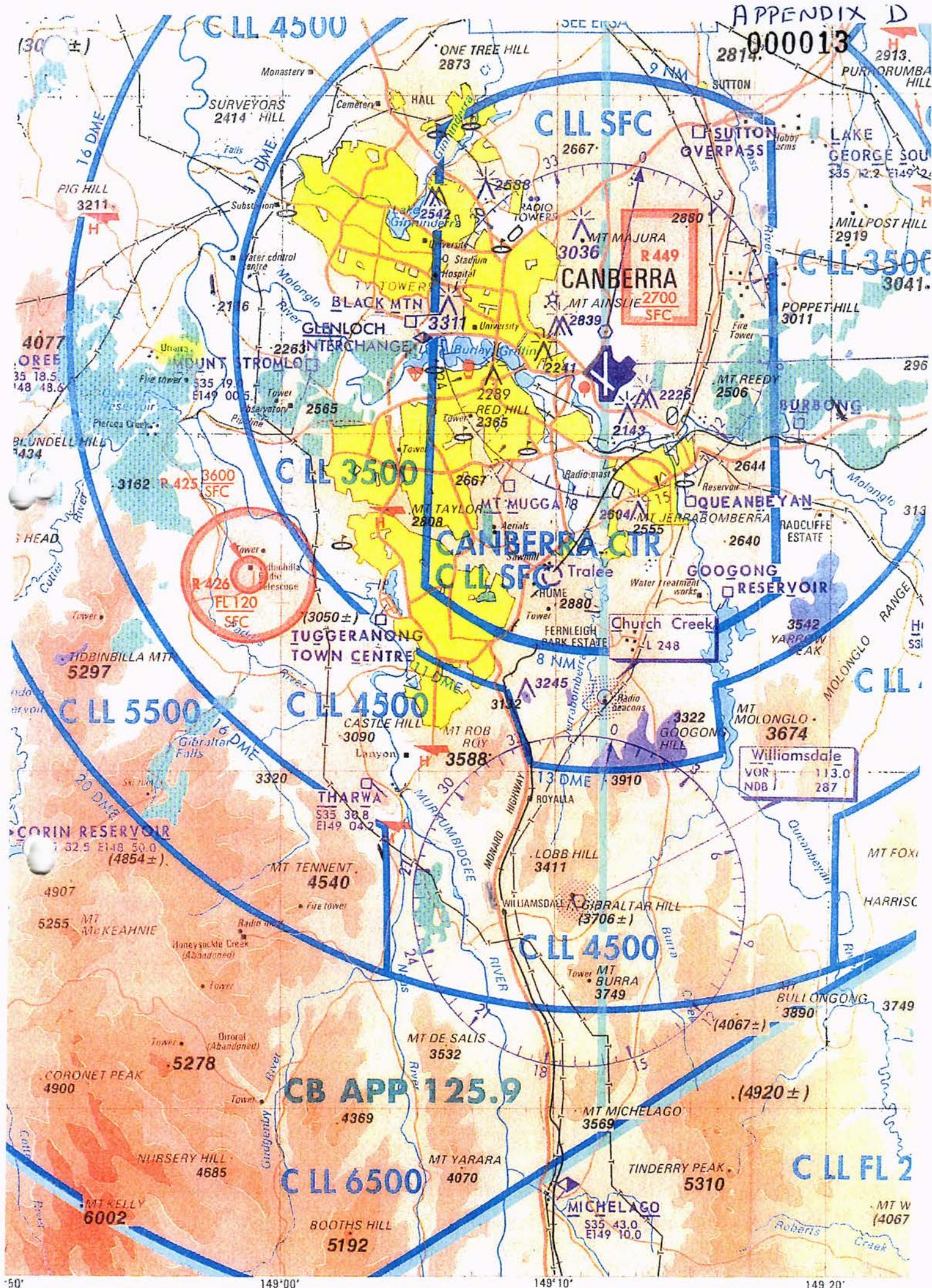
000019

Business Plan Sensitivity Projection - Anticipated activity plus 30%

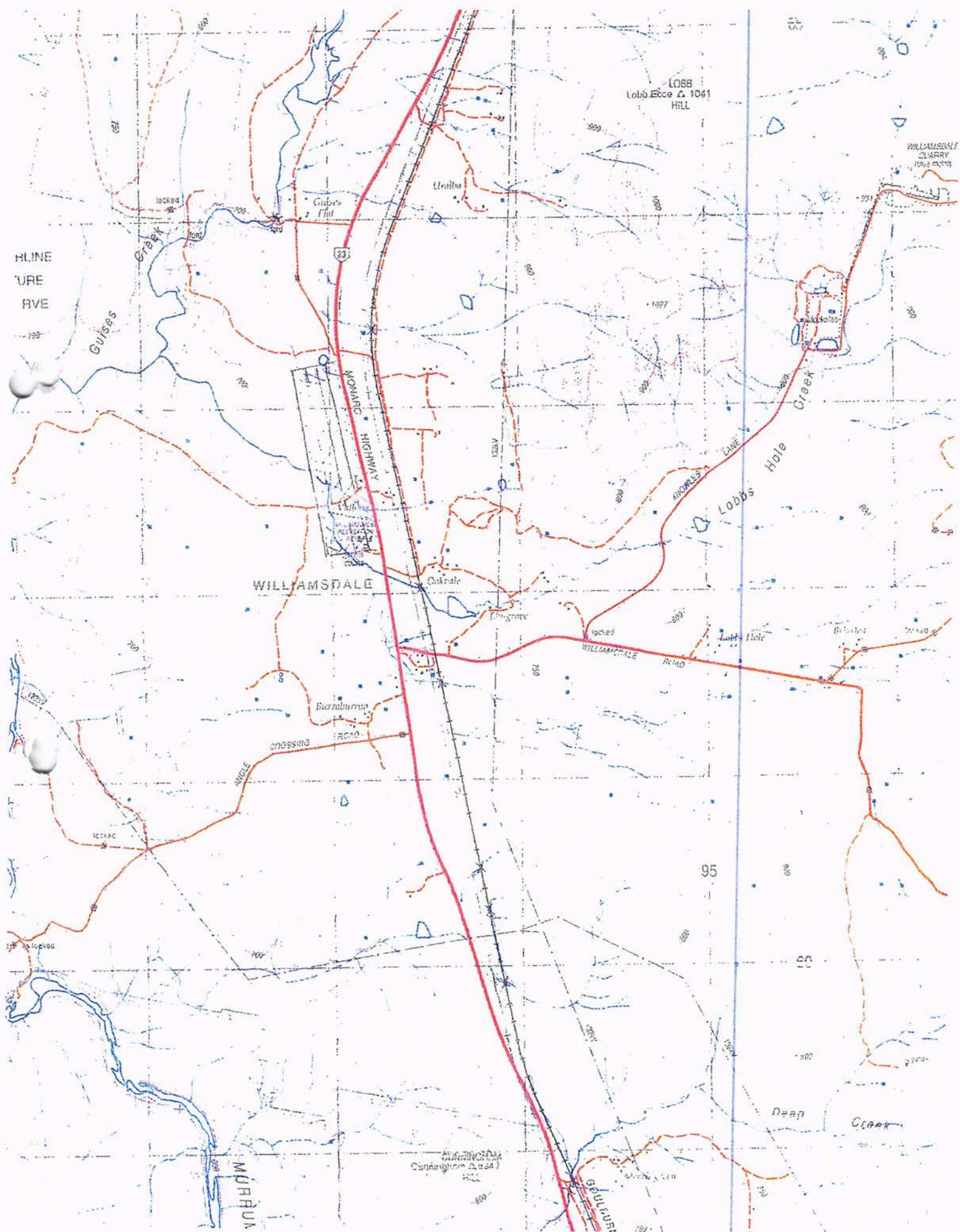
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Revenue					
Landing Fees	5164	7948	10733	16598	22979
Overnight Parking	1268	1919	2613	3471	4836
Hangarage Ground Rent - Private	0	0	7020	18720	23400
Hangarage Ground Rent - Commercial	0	0	7800	15600	23400
Fuel Sales Profit	13150	16788	19213	27774	31540
Aircraft Parking	32240	42640	50440	87984	109200
Sponsorships	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000
Total Revenue	66821	84295	112819	185147	230355
Expenditure					
Administrative Salary	36400	36400	38220	38220	41277
Superannuation SGC	3276	3276	3440	3440	3715
Field Maintenance - Runway	2400	2400	2400	7200	17500
Field Maintenance - Security	750	750	750	1250	1250
Light, Heat & Power	1800	2160	2400	3600	3600
Telephones	3000	3300	3630	4800	5200
Advertising & Promotion	9000	6000	6000	12000	12000
Printing & Stationery & Postage	3000	1500	1800	2400	300
Fire and Safety Services	600	600	600	1000	1000
Cleaning	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500
Sewerage	500	500	500	1000	1000
Refuse Costs	1400	1400	1400	2100	2100
Insurance	15000	15000	15000	24000	24000
Legal & Professional costs	2400	1200	2400	1200	1200
Rent	0	0	0	0	0
Rates	0	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Renewals	1200	1500	1800	2400	3000
Licences & Fees	2000				
Total Expenditure	84226	77486	81840	106110	118642
Nett Profit/(Loss)	-17405	6809	30979	79037	111713

000018

Capital Budget Williamsdale Airfield	2005
Strip Grading & Preparation	300000
Security Fencing	75000
Runway/taxi/parking marking & Tie downs	3500
Electricity / Water Supply	4000
Administration Building	65000
Car Parking / Social Amenities	8000
Toilet Block/Sewage System	35000
Equipment Storage/Airfield Workshop	75000
Fire & Safety Equipment	15000
Airfield Lighting - Windsocks & Beacon	7500
Base Radio/Weather Station	1500
Signage	1400
Airfield Maintenance Equipment	12000
Fuel Distribution Equipment	18000
Office Equipment	3600
Computer Equipment	4500
Telephones/fax/Internet Installation	1500
Contingency	30000
Total Capital Budget	660500



000012



000011



AIRSERVICES AUSTRALIA

Peter Coburn
 National Manager
 Airspace & Military Liaison
 Airservices Australia
 14 January 2004.

Mr Christopher Price

Chris
 Dear Sir,

I refer to your letter to Mr Collin Kuchel of Airservices Australia, dated 22 December 2003, for advice on the suitability of locating a licenced airfield at S 35 34.4 E 149 07.3. (See Attachment A.)

An assessment of potential airspace management requirements and the impact they may have on aircraft operators and Airservices Australia, indicates there are no impediments or restrictions that may apply to the location of the airfield.

From the information provided, the location provides good access for VFR operations to be conducted within Class G airspace and clear of controlled airspace. Pilots requiring access to controlled airspace would also be able to depart with sufficient alternative routes available in Class G airspace to progress their flight with minimal delay while awaiting airways clearance.

This assessment is of course subject to any airspace changes that may occur in the future, however I can confirm that there is very little likelihood of any increase to controlled airspace in the vicinity of your proposed site.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Coburn

AIRSERVICES AUSTRALIA

Airspace & Military

Liaison

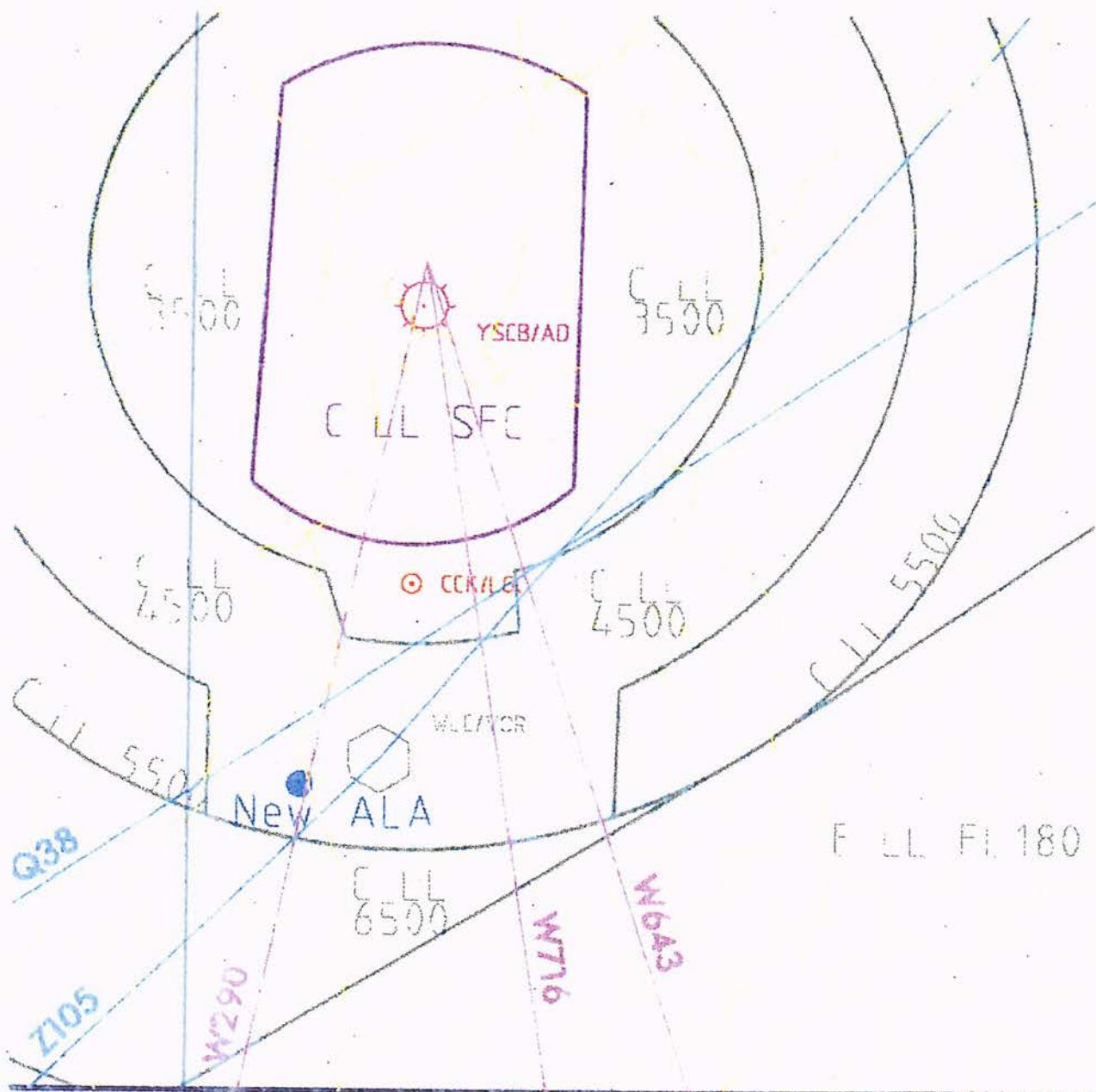
Locked Bag 747

Eagle Farm QLD 4009

07 38663728

www.airservices.gov.au

ABN 59 698 720 886



000009

**Airport Flying School**

A.C.N 008 579 235

A.B.N 73 008 579 235

Cnr. Nomad Drive
& Walker Street
Canberra Airport

Phone: 02) 6248 6292
A/H: 02) 6248 6292
Fax: 02) 6257 9440

P.O Box 887
Fyshwick
A.C.T 2609

January 19, 2004

Mr Chris Price

Dear Chris

Following our recent discussion regarding the possibility of a new General Aviation Airfield at Williamsdale, I would like to formally confirm that we would be very keen to support such a development. We are looking to relocate our training facilities and aircraft operations in order to provide us with potential for expansion. As you are aware we currently operate a fleet of seven aircraft and are looking to acquire two more in the next six months.

In addition we would like to discuss further the possibility of a mutually beneficial financial arrangement whereby we would provide the local administrative facilities and personnel in exchange for operational cost savings at the new facility.

I look forward to further detailed discussions and if I can be of any assistance in the preparation of your proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Reed
Managing Director

All communications to be addressed to:

Yarrowlumla / Queanbeyan District
NSW Rural Fire Service
10 Ellerton Dr
Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Telephone: (02) 6297 1840
e-mail: Bruce.Arthur@rfs.nsw.gov.au

Yarrowlumla / Queanbeyan
NSW Rural Fire Service
PO Box 2234
Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Facsimile: (02) 6297 0068



Ms Chris Price

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

21 January 2004

Dear Chris

Airstrip - Williamsdale

Further to our discussion on Monday last I can advise you that the Yarrowlumla / Queanbeyan Rural Fire District of the NSW Rural Fire Service would consider the establishment of a licensed airstrip in the Williamsdale area as being a strategic and tactical resource available for aerial fire fighting operations.

In particular such a facility could be advantageous in the deployment of fixed wing "Fire Bomber" aircraft into the southeastern quadrant of the District, the Tinderry Ranges and the northern area of the Monaro District.

Yours faithfully

Superintendent Bruce Arthur OAM
Fire Control Officer

FACSIMILE
000007

HEWATT

EARTHWORKS

Civil Engineering Contractor

PTY LTD ABN 68 008 623 309

P.O. Box 94
HALL ACT 2618
Phone: 02 6227 5694
Fax: 02 6227 5687
E-mail: hewattew@bigpond.com.au

COMPANY NAME:

ATTENTION: Chris Price

FAX No.:

FROM: Geoff Hewatt

DATE: 8-Dec-03

No of pages (including cover sheet): 1

RE: Future Airstrip - Williamsdale

We are pleased to provide the following budget costing information for your project as discussed this morning:

- Site establishment , Environmental control, Quality Assurance and survey
Approx \$ 20,000
- Strip and then replace onsite topsoil after earthworks are completed
Approx \$ 20,000
- Construct 1100m x 35m wide grass runway formed from onsite material
Approx \$160,000
- Supply and construct stormwater system 5 culvers in total including twin and triple cell culverts.
Approx \$ 70,000
- Provisional sum for unexpected works including unsuitable material etc
Approx \$30,000

Total Estimate (Exc GST) \$ 300,000

Works not included above

- Seeding and consolidation of grass
- Entrance road off Monaro Highway, intersection and signage

Please call me on 0417 632 209 if you require any further information
Regards,

Geoff Hewatt
Director

To: Mr Chris Price

000006

Issues which should be addressed in developing a business case for a second airport. This is indicative only, and is not intended as a "blueprint" or an exhaustive list of information which should be included, simply as a list of some of the points which would inform government about your proposal. Government will no doubt require information on other matters emerging out of any proposal.

- Costs are important.
 - In this context, it is essential to identify the area of land required and its location (this will permit determination of the opportunity cost for the site, assuming it is to be provided gratis/peppercorn by government)
 - Assume that an EIS will be necessary. Who will pay? How much will it cost?
 - What costs involved in levelling/preparing surfaces and other airport works? In this area, you should identify the full commercial cost of work required, and the timing involved in such expenditure (ie if it is intended to start at, say a 1200 m grass strip and eventually extend to a 2200 m made surface, what is the likely timing of costs?). This establishes the *base case*, that is, if your proposals for reducing costs (see below) fail, what government *might* eventually end up being liable for (this helps government understand the risk profile of any commitment that it might enter into).
 - Following this, identify strategies for reducing/minimising costs, including what commitments can be expected from people or companies, and what they will expect in return (ie long term commitment, ownership of improvements, etc).
 - Operating costs – how much, what assumptions underlie them, change over time, potential for surplus revenue, assumptions underlying *that* estimate, etc.
- What ownership arrangements are proposed? This could be particularly tricky. If government is providing land on peppercorn rental but surrendering control or guaranteeing property rights to a third party, this can easily be construed as government giving land to a private organisation (even a not-for-profit one) – something government rarely does (it hates precedents like that!). This could be even trickier where it is evident that government is also assuming some of the project risk (completion or remediation, management etc).
- What issues are likely to arise in relation to operations? Is it controlled airspace? How will operations affect/be affected by Canberra airport? What of safety requirements – fire services, etc? Any other CASA/Air Services issues?

- What area around the proposed airfield will be effectively sterilised for residential or other (alternative to agricultural) uses? This requires some sort of crude ANEF or 70dB analysis, but could be done from the estimates provided on the demand side of the business case, based on assumed aircraft mix/patronage).
- What is the demand for the airfield? How many owners, private/commercial, where are they located, what is the expected growth path of usage over time, how does this impact on commercial returns over time?
- What are the risk factors involved for government and the community – financial, physical etc – and what minimisation strategies does the proposal put forward to minimise government's risk profile?
- Why will Canberra International Airport be unsuitable in the long term? What sort of time frame are we talking about? Does this include consideration of (say) a second, shorter runway catering to regional and (theoretically) GA traffic?
- What strategic considerations of government will the airfield serve? Ie, what other reasons can you put forward to persuade government to undertake *this* particular investment of public goods, as opposed to others that may compete with it (I'm not suggesting that you have to identify these others!).
- Anything else that you consider may support your case.

As you can see, the requirement of a business case (or at least, this one) fall into these areas:

1. Costs – capital and recurrent
2. Demand and associated income streams
3. Risk – to the community and to government (both financially and otherwise)
4. Reason – why government should commit public resources to this.

It is unlikely that you can establish an economic case for the airfield – ie as an investment by government in something that will have a financial return for the community , something my colleagues in Treasury and the Land Development Agency are very strong on. You should also realise that if it is developed for a relatively small number of recreational or leisure fliers, it will be seen as elitist. Essentially, you need to build your case as to why it is good for the community, even if the payback to the community takes time, and how it can be developed with minimal risks to the public purse.

Another hurdle that will need to be overcome is that of planning. As I understand it, whatever site might be selected within the ACT will require the Territory Plan to be changed and, I think, the National Capital Plan. The NCP is a Commonwealth (ie Parliamentary) matter.



000005

TS:bm

5 June 2003

Mr Jon Stanhope
Chief Minister
ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601



Dear Jon

Further to your advice that you have been approached by a number of general aviation operators at the Canberra Airport to have another airport in the ACT, we would support this application but we would urge that your Government should not consider anything less than an approved aerodrome under the Department of Transport and Regional Services' auspices, which will ensure the very minimum standard for safety, environmental protection and community amenity issues. This process would make it incumbent upon the applicants to prepare a master plan and have discussions with the community on the impact of its activities, comply with CASA requirements, fit with Airservices Australia airspace system, would not compromise service delivery, meet building regulations, have a protocol for fuel contamination, and comply with the National Capital Plan, wherever the Department chooses to locate it.

While the oil companies manage the supply of fuel here at Canberra Airport, they need continual monitoring because even the best intentioned operators will have accidents and there needs to be a proper strategy to protect the environment and recovery procedures need to be mandated. The proponents may suggest to the Government that all they need is the equivalent of an agricultural strip; this would be completely inappropriate and would be unregulated, not supervised by CASA or the Department of Transport regulations for airports and would pose enormous risks for the community in that area and could well put the ACT Government in a situation for conflict with other leaseholders.

These are not insurmountable requirements but will need a considered and properly funded approach to meet the necessary safety, environmental and community expectations in operating such a facility. I would be happy to make the Airport resources available to the Government to assist in the facilitation of this project if the Government wanted to move ahead and proceed. I will send a copy of this letter to the Chairman of the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce to assure him that, if the Taskforce were to consider this option in the non urban land use review, the Airport would not stand in the way.

Yours sincerely

Terry Snow /
Executive Chairman

MINUTE

000004



CHIEF MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT

Date 29 May 2003

To Chief Minister
• Chief Executive *29/5*
• Senior Director, Policy Group *29/5*

From Andrew Wilson, Policy Group

Subject Meeting with Trevor Kaine on General Aviation Airport



Critical date and reason

You have agreed to meet with Mr Trevor Kaine at 2.00 pm on 3 June 2003 in your office in order to discuss allocation of an area to develop a General Aviation airport in the ACT. It is understood that he will be accompanied by some members of the General Aviation community.

Purpose

Mr Kaine is representing the General Aviation (GA) community and is seeking ACT Government agreement to providing a site, possibly at Uriarra, for the purpose of developing a General Aviation airfield.

Background

Some members of the local GA community are concerned that costs of operating GA aircraft at the airport have risen. There is a perception that the airport management is discouraging GA activity at the airport, and Mr Kaine estimates that some 70 percent of GA operators have already departed Canberra airport.

The airport management's response is that ground rents and aircraft parking fees charged under the previous management regime had no commercial relationship to the value of the land involved, and current charges are still not fully commercial. Similarly, landing fees did not reflect commercial reality. Essentially, it is a commercial decision on the part of the airport management, and it has focused on higher value activities at the airport.

Urban Services commissioned Maunsell McIntyre Pty Ltd to undertake a study (essentially a review of the many studies that have been conducted back to the 1960s) to determine whether it would be possible to identify a site for a second ACT airport, in this case to serve the GA community. Maunsell McIntyre completed its report in February 2001, and this report identified four sites that would meet operational requirements for GA. All four sites, however, had significant issues associated with them, ranging from the high cost of earthworks through community noise issues, to heritage and environmental issues. Of the four (which were identified in earlier studies) the most suitable from a *technical* perspective was deemed to be at Uriarra. A brief to the Minister for Urban Services outlining the report is attached for your information (Attachment A).

At the time of the earlier decision based on the 2001 report, Uriarra was under use for forestry. Mr Kaine makes the point that following the recent bushfires, this is no longer a constraint at Uriarra. However, there are still planning, environmental, heritage and land ownership issues that would need to be addressed.

Issues

Mr Kaine's letter does not discuss the issue of the cost of developing the site as an airfield. This is likely to be an expensive exercise, even if extensive earthworks are not required. In addition, there are on-going maintenance and operational costs.

It is unlikely that an investor or investors will be found to fund establishing the airfield, even if the ACT Government provides the land free of charge. Whilst the airfield would have a lower capital investment than Canberra Airport, and would likely be cheaper to operate, it would require a significant number of users and charge significant fees for landing, parking and site rental in order to justify a commercial investment. It is not clear that this income would be sufficient to cover operating costs.

Most of the evidence about the importance and plight of GA is anecdotal. There is no hard evidence either in the ACT or elsewhere as to its significance except to fairly affluent enthusiasts and often marginal commercial operators. Those who are running successfully commercial operations, such as Brindabella Airlines, have remained at the airport and continue to thrive.

An argument has been put forward that GA is the nursery for commercial pilots and that without GA to provide the training ground, there will be a shortage of pilots for commercial aviation. This would suggest that larger aviation companies are not meeting their share of training costs, and are being subsidised by enthusiastic student pilots and governments (or these days, private airport operators) providing implicit subsidies to GA. Larger aviation companies do, however, already provide extensive pilot training to meet their own needs and, as they undertake their forward planning, are likely to address any shortfall with additional training programs designed to meet their own specific needs.

The real issue is therefore likely to be increased cost to private enthusiasts and marginally profitable commercial fliers operating in an increasingly commercial environment. It should be noted that the response to higher GA costs of increasing numbers of aviation enthusiasts is to turn to ultralight aviation, which has far lower entry and operational costs, as well as fewer operation restrictions, including landing field requirements. This is balanced perhaps by a higher risk factor, but is still subject to meeting aviation standards set by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

GA at the national level

Discussion with the Department of Transport and Regional Services indicates that, following lobbying of Minister Anderson by Dick Smith, the Department has been instructed to undertake an in-house study on the true state of GA in Australia (Canberra is by no means the only source of GA complaints), and possible measures to revive the sector. It is anticipated that the ACT will be able to obtain access to this report.

Following the DOTARS study, it may be possible to better assess the value of General Aviation to the community and economy, and establish whether a case exists for Government intervention. In this context, there may be a Commonwealth Government response which would assist in developing a local case.

Whether there is a Commonwealth response or not, determination of the case for ACT Government involvement needs to be based on a better understanding of the costs and returns. These include the opportunity cost for the land, the size and nature of the investment required of the ACT Government, ongoing costs and returns, and the true nature of the value of GA activity to the Canberra community.

It is not certain that the DOTARS study, being conducted internally, will be made public. Advice on the study was received informally and in confidence, and it may be better to indicate that the Commonwealth is considering GA issues following representations from the GA community.

Mr Rice, Senior Director, Policy Group, will attend as the Departmental Representative.

Recommendation

- That you note the above information for your meeting with Mr Kaine and delegation.
- You may wish to make the following points:
 - as a general rule, land that is to be developed for commercial purposes will be released through an open and competitive process;
 - proponents would need to demonstrate the financial backing to fund development of an airport and its ongoing financial viability, if Government is to take the matter further;
 - if a Government contribution is anticipated, it would require a sound case establishing the benefits to the community as a whole, which would need to be considered in relation to the value of alternative uses of the land;
 - it would still be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment; and
 - it would have to be considered in the Budget context.

Andrew Wilson

Jon Stanhope MLA / /
AGREED/NOT AGREED/NOTED/PLEASE DISCUSS