

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 1 March 2006, the proposal construction of housing for Defence at Fairview Rise, Ipswich, Queensland, was referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).¹ The proponent agency for this work is the Defence Housing Authority (DHA).
- 1.2 DHA states in its main submission that the proposed works is estimated to cost \$50.7 million.² Subject to parliamentary approval, DHA will provide 162 fully serviced residential lots in two phases. The first phase beginning in August 2006 with housing completion scheduled for November 2007; and the second phase will begin in March 2007 with housing completion scheduled for June 2009.³

1 Extract from the *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, No. 88, Wednesday 1 March 2006

2 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 21.1

3 *ibid*, paragraph 1.2

Background

Defence Housing Authority

- 1.3 The DHA was established in 1988 to provide housing and relocation services for Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel after it was discovered that low standards of accommodation were having a negative impact on Defence morale. The DHA aims to provide Defence personnel and the families with a standard of housing at least equal to that enjoyed by the broader community in which they live.
- 1.4 The DHA employs a variety of delivery methods to meet Defence accommodation requirements, including:
- construction of off-base with a view to retention or future sale of the properties;
 - construction of on-base as dictated by Defence operational policy requirements;
 - direct purchase of established properties, with a view to retention or future sale; and
 - direct lease through the private rental market.

Site of the Proposed Work

- 1.5 The site, part of the existing Fairview Rise Estate in the suburb of Flinders Rise, is located within an urban residential area under the Ipswich Southern Corridor Structure Plan and will be developed in accordance with that plan.
- 1.6 The 19.64 hectare site is six kilometres south-east of the Ipswich city centre and eight kilometres east of RAAF base Amberley. The site is bounded to the south by the Cunningham Highway, to the west by the unformed Whitehill Road and a residential development, and to the north and east by the existing Fairview Rise Estate. The site is located close to community facilities, shopping facilities and schools. The area is serviced by public transport, the local authority road network, and commuter rail connection between Ipswich and Brisbane.⁴

4 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 5

Inquiry Process

- 1.7 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million⁵ and report to Parliament on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.⁶
- 1.8 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in the *Courier Mail* on Saturday, 25 March 2006. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, private organisations and individuals, who may be materially affected by, or have an interest in, the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and other information relating to the inquiry on its web site in order to encourage further public participation.

Inspection and Public Hearing

- 1.9 On 16 May 2006 the Committee visited Fairview Rise, Ipswich, Qld, and inspected the site and environs of the proposed works. A commercial-in-confidence briefing on project costs from DHA and a public hearing were held in Ipswich later that day.⁷

5 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

6 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 17

7 See Appendix D for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearing on Tuesday, 16 May 2006 in Ipswich