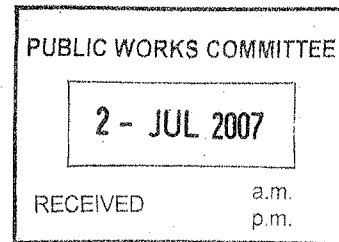


29 JUN 2007

Mr John Fuhrman
Inquiry Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
C/- jcpw@aph.gov.au



Dear Mr Fuhrman

Thank you for your letter dated 12 June 2007 regarding notification of RAAF Base Amberley Redevelopment Stage 3, Queensland proposal that has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report to the Commonwealth Parliament.

Prior to the receipt of formal notification by the Honourable Brendan Nelson MP, Minister for Defence, in October 2006, officers from the Department of Education, Training and the Arts undertook preliminary discussions with Department of Defence personnel regarding the requirement for Amberley State School to cease operations from its current site due to its pending location within the secure perimeter of the Base.

Following receipt of correspondence from the Minister for Defence a comprehensive consultation process with school staff, parents, community members and Federal, State and Local Authority representatives was undertaken. The resultant report indicated strong parental and community support for a new school to replace the existing Amberley State School.

Subsequent to correspondence between the Honourable Rod Welford MP, Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts and the Minister for Defence it was reassuring to hear the Prime Minister's recent announcement of Federal Government funding of \$26.83m to support the relocation of the school to a new site.

The identification of an appropriate site for a relocated school is continuing and once the preferred site is identified and has undergone the appropriate investigation reports further consultation will occur with the key stakeholder groups.

Dot Point 84 within the report states no additional childcare facilities are being provided under this project. In securing new school sites the department sets aside an area of 2000m² to accommodate future child care provision. It would be the expectation of this department that the Department of Defence would give serious consideration to the provision of funding to enable the local C&K group to establish new child-care facilities on the new school site.

The department does not wish to appear before the Committee when it meets in Ipswich on 24 July 2007.

I invite you to contact Mr Jim Wiedman, Principal Advisor Facilities Planning, Strategic Facilities Branch on telephone (07) 3237 0224 should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Hunter".

Rachel Hunter
Director-General

Ref: 07/79747