

## Issues and Conclusions

### External Consultations

#### Energy Management and Lighting

- 4.1 Defence advised that the design of all power supply, electrical and mechanical equipment would include an assessment of energy use. A life cycle costing methodology and power demand analysis would be applied. The proposed facilities would incorporate building managements systems, metering and other provisions to measure and monitor energy use and facilitate regular energy audits.
- 4.2 Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions would be reduced by the following methods:
- controlled lighting, where possible, by photoelectric switches;
  - time-switch schedules;
  - sensor controlled lighting to intermittently occupied areas;
  - high efficient fluorescent lamps;
  - external lighting to minimise glare and colour distortion;
  - air-conditioned areas to be controlled by the Building Management System and include time switches where appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Submissions Volume, p. 32.

- 4.3 The Committee sought advice as to whether consultations were proposed with the Australian Greenhouse Office for the possible use of gas as an option.
- 4.4 Brigadier Kelly replied that the use of gas had not been considered as a viable option. Brigadier Kelly added that gas would not be considered an 'acceptable solution' because the purpose of the central emergency power station is to immune the Base from impact on external services, particularly during operations. Brigadier Kelly stressed that the Base would not wish to be reliant on a gas main to run its emergency generator. It required its own stand-alone generators completely separated from the external grid.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.5 Defence's submission noted that the following organisations would be consulted during the development of the project:
- Federal and State Government representatives for the area;
  - Environment Australia;
  - Australian Heritage Commission;
  - Townsville and Thuringowa City Councils;
  - Townsville and Thuringowa Chambers of Commerce;
  - Australian Customs and Quarantine;
  - Australian Greenhouse Office; and
  - the Queensland Main Roads Department.<sup>3</sup>
- 4.6 The Queensland Department of Main Roads advised the Committee that it had no objection to the proposal.<sup>4</sup>

## Demolition and Heritage Issues

- 4.7 Defence proposes to demolish a number of facilities as part of its redevelopment proposal for Stage 2. According to Defence, the facilities marked for demolition are old and occupy space required for replacement facilities. Other facilities intended for demolition are either located in inappropriate high noise zones or are a potential maintenance liability and surplus to Defence requirements.<sup>5</sup>

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2 Evidence, p. 24.

3 Submissions Volume 1, p. 35.

4 Submissions Volume 1, p. 61.

5 Submissions Volume 1, p. 29.

- 4.8 Defence noted in their submission that there are no historic sites identified in the Register of National Estate at the Base, although there are 'some assets that may be of heritage interest'. Defence assured the Committee that consultations would be conducted with the Australian Heritage Commission in the context of the demolition activities.<sup>6</sup>

### Issues Raised by Australian Heritage Commission

- 4.9 A submission from the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) advised that 'the proposed works would not have an adverse impact on the national estate values of the Townsville Town Common' adjacent to the Base.<sup>7</sup>
- 4.10 However, the AHC has raised a number of issues which have been identified by the *Draft RAAF Base Townsville EIA (Phase 2) historical Cultural Heritage Assessment* report. The issues are:
- 36 buildings of World War II vintage are eligible for nomination on the Register of the National Estate (RNE);
  - Defence should consider its proposals 'as if the 36 building buildings were included in the RNE';
  - the proposed works for the main base entrance and combined headquarters would adversely impact on the Airmen's Mess and the Airmen's Sergeants' accommodation blocks, which are considered significant;
  - planning should be done with regard to places of historical significance;
  - demolition and extensive alteration of the historic buildings should be 'last resort' option;
  - Defence should consult with the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency to determine whether the site contains Indigenous heritage issues;
  - the Environmental Management Plan currently being prepared by Defence should include a management process in the event that Indigenous or historic archaeological material is located during construction works;
  - the management process for Indigenous material should be prepared in consultation with the Wulgurukaba Aboriginal Corporation and the Bindal and Elders Reference Group Incorporated.<sup>8</sup>

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6 Submissions Volume 1, p. 35.

7 Submissions Volume 1, p. 53.

8 Submissions Volume 1, pp. 53-54.

- 4.11 The Committee asked Defence whether consultations had taken place with the AHC and what action was proposed by Defence as a result of AHC's suggestions.
- 4.12 Mr Mollison replied that Defence had met with the AHC and discussed the requirements for a conservation management plan. Defence proposed to engage a heritage consultant or heritage architect to assist in developing the conservation management plan in conjunction with the AHC.
- 4.13 Mr Mollison added that Defence would follow the requirements of the AHC of recording old buildings proposed for demolition.<sup>9</sup>
- 4.14 Brigadier Kelly added that Defence anticipates meeting the AHC's desired outcome of 'keeping virtually all of these buildings.' Brigadier Kelly added that experience with the AHC in the past had been 'quite pragmatic' when a case has been put that older buildings were sited in the middle of a proposed redevelopment. Brigadier Kelly further observed that it was probable that old buildings, such as the gymnasium, currently identified for demolition, had the potential for re-use.<sup>10</sup>
- 4.15 Brigadier Kelly also advised that with regard to archaeological relics, the traditional owners provide monitors who observe the works. Brigadier Kelly observed that during work on Stage 1, workers had identified a number of relics which, caused work to stop in order to examine and investigate the objects before continuing.<sup>11</sup>

## Environmental Considerations

- 4.16 According to Defence's submission, the project has been considered in relation to the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The Submission claims that there are no issues relating to the defined impacts which include world heritage, specific wetland types, listed threatened or endangered species, nuclear activities, activities affecting Commonwealth marine areas, significant impacts on Commonwealth land and external impacts affecting Commonwealth land.
- 4.17 The submission also states that an extensive environmental assessment was made in preparation for the Stage 1 redevelopment. At that time, no significant environmental concerns were identified.<sup>12</sup>
- 4.18 Environment Australia has assessed Defence's comments on environmental issues and advised the Committee that there appears to be

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9 Evidence, p. 26.

10 Evidence, pp.26-27.

11 Evidence, p. 27.

12 Submissions Volume 1, pp. 34-35.

no major environmental impacts associated with the proposal. According to Environment Australia, under the requirements of the EPBC Act, the proponent is required to refer to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage a works project that is likely to have a significant environmental impact.<sup>13</sup>

- 4.19 The Committee expects that Defence would undertake an environmental assessment under the terms of the EPBC Act and refer to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage any areas potentially requiring approval.

## Staff Consultations

- 4.20 The Committee sought advice about the extent of consultations undertaken with the personnel and staff at the Base in relation to the design, shape and changes that are taking place.
- 4.21 Wing Commander McHugh replied that consultations across the Base had been extensive with the all sections of the population as to the type and nature of facility required. Wing Commander McHugh added that workshops were convened in order to obtain input from staff. Wing Commander McHugh assured the Committee that consultations with staff would continue.<sup>14</sup>

## Conclusion

- 4.22 The Committee's examination of the Stage 2 redevelopment has highlighted the extent to which confusion could occur with staged development projects. In order to facilitate the Committee's investigations into a given stage, it would assist the Committee if Defence could submit for each individual stage an overview of the scope for all the stages proposed, and the cost of each element.
- 4.23 If the Committee had before it a full scoping study of the various stages of the development projects, the Committee would be better placed to discuss with Defence their changing priorities. In this Inquiry, the Committee learnt at the public hearing that elements of the Stage 1 project, which had been given high priority, such as the Ordnance Loading Apron Complex, were deferred to Stage 2. Even more puzzling was another

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13 Submissions Volume 1, p. 57.

14 Evidence, p. 26.

Defence priority in Stage 1, the Light Tactical Aircraft Facilities. This has been deferred for 10 years.

- 4.24 The Committee endeavours to inquire quickly into all proposals before it and make recommendations to the Parliament. However, its work can be significantly hampered when the information presented to it is unclear. The Committee expects that all proposals presented by Defence should be as comprehensive as possible and the information clearly presented.

### **Recommendation 2**

- 4.25 **The Committee recommends that the Redevelopment Stage 2 RAAF Base Townsville, Queensland proceed at the capped budget of \$72.5 million, subject to compliance with greenhouse, environmental and heritage provisions.**

Hon Judi Moylan MP  
Chair

30 August 2001