



31 January 2012

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF RAAF BASE EAST SALE

1. RAAF Base East Sale has for over 65 years been a valued part of the Sale community and the regional economy. During all of these years, Council has protected the base from urban encroachment. RAAF Base East Sale continues to be surrounded by farmland.
2. Faced with the need to grow the city of Sale to meet the demand for residential housing, Council made the decision as part of the Sale, Wurruk, Longford Structure Plan to grow its residential zone to the north of Sale toward Stratford and Maffra rather than towards the RAAF base. As a result of the Structure Plan and competition in the market place, there is currently enough residential zoned land in Sale to meet demand for the next five to seven years and Council is working on other areas for future residential rezoning away from RAAF Base East Sale.
3. There are over 600 uniform and civilian staff permanently based at, RAAF Base East Sale along with approximately 200 uniformed students attending training at the base. As such, RAAF Base East Sale is one of the largest employers in Wellington Shire.
4. The contribution of those personnel to the economy (being relatively well paid compared to the general populace) is important in that it has significant flow on benefits to retail, hospitality and building industries regardless of drought or other seasonal variations.
5. Wellington Shire Council endorses the redevelopment of infrastructure at the RAAF Base to ensure that working and living conditions of the service men and women and the contractors meet modern standards.
6. Defence is a key part of our diverse economy. There is already flow on to the many contractors who provide infrastructure and services for the RAAF Base. Many of these businesses stand ready to tender on the redevelopment of the base.

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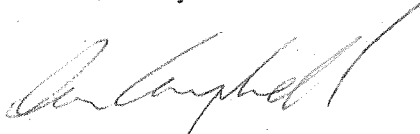
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7. Council has worked closely with the Department of Defence to make RAAF Base East Sale a posting where families are welcomed and supported. The Council website www.raafbaseeastosaleregion.com.au provides information on employment for partners, schools for children, lifestyle attractions and real estate.
8. The website features over 50 businesses that welcome employment applications from the partners and families of Defence members.
9. The website also illustrates a very important point in including job advertisements from the Bairnsdale Advertiser, Gippsland Times and Latrobe Valley Express.. There is no Berlin Wall between Sale and the Latrobe Valley half an hour's drive to the South or between Sale and Bairnsdale forty minutes to the North. Businesses, workers and residents make the journey every day. A traffic survey indicates that there are over 3,000 journeys every weekday between Sale and the Latrobe Valley.
10. The proposed project will not only benefit the Sale and Wellington Shire economy but also the Latrobe Valley and East Gippsland where several local businesses have already demonstrated an interest in the project. East Gippsland, Shire, Wellington Shire and the Latrobe Valley have a combined population of over 150,000 people.
11. This project comes at a time when there is significant insecurity among businesses as a result of putting a price on carbon and the anticipated impact on businesses in and around the Latrobe Valley. The potential closure of a power station is a major concern.
12. There will be capacity within the region for the recruitment of workers, the contracting of businesses and the accommodation of staff and contractors from outside the region, to meet the demands of the project. Other major projects such as the Building the Education Revolution have wound down. The Desalination Plant at Wonthaggi and the Turrum and Kipper Field development offshore will be complete.
13. A Community Consultation meeting held in Sale on October 26 attracted over 70 business and community registrations. The majority of these were business owners from the Latrobe City, Wellington and East Gippsland Shire Council areas, reflecting the desire of local businesses to tender for the proposed works.
14. Council and Thiess are working with the Industry Capability Network on the Project Gateway to gauge interest in the project from businesses. There are currently over 140 businesses registered on the ICN Gateway for this project. This is 12 months away from project start.

15. In addition to these, there are more than 50 businesses on Wellington Shire Council's business database who have indicated an interested in tendering for parts of the project but are not familiar with the process of registering on line.
16. Council, The Australian Building and Construction Commission and the Industry Capability Network are working together to ensure that local and regional businesses are fully aware of and educated about, OH&S and National Code of Practice requirements for working on a Defence base. Workshops for local businesses have been tentatively planned for late March or early April to educate businesses about the National Code of Practice and registering to tender. This is expected to maximize the potential for local businesses to participate in the tender when the project is approved and minimise the number of workers from outside the region needing accommodation.
17. The Officer Training School project at RAAF Base East Sale, also managed by Thiess was 'on time and on budget' using a similar but less supported process. We believe that this project will provide even better outcomes for Gippsland and for Defence.
18. Council has worked closely with Thiess and Aurecon to ensure that residents are kept informed and potential traffic challenges associated with the project are addressed well in advance. Aerodrome Road, the main road to the base is a well constructed and mostly four lane VicRoads road. This will take the majority of the heavy traffic. Lower Hart Road will accommodate the lighter, worker traffic.
19. Should you wish clarification on any of the aspects raised in this submission, please contact Senior Economic Development Officer Ian Campbell on 03)51423602 or email ian.campbell@wellington.vic.gov.au .

Yours sincerely



Ian Campbell
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