

Ms Vivienne Courto  
Inquiry Secretary  
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Dear Ms Courto,

You requested DHA comment on the submissions to the Committee from Adamstown Community Forum dated 27 January 2003 and from the Adamstown Residents Action Group Dated 21 January 2003.

### **Adamstown Community Forum Submission**

The Forum's submission makes the following assertions:

- The distance from Adamstown to RAAF Williamstown is excessive (30km);
- More profit would be available to DHA from a different subdivision; and
- Community concerns have been ignored in respect of:
  - traffic,
  - open space,
  - density of development, and
  - flora and fauna.

In response to the first point, it needs to be recognised that distance from the workplace is not the only criterion for placement of Defence housing. We are as concerned about the members' families as we are about the members themselves. DHA developments take into account proximity to the normal amenities available to other members of the community, including schooling, shopping and spouse employment opportunities.

In response to the second point, while DHA seeks to operate commercially, its quest for profit is tempered by its essential role, which is to recognise the significant challenges that frequent moves can pose for Defence families. Our main concern is to deliver housing and relocation services that reduce the additional stress of Defence family life and allow them both to enjoy and to contribute to the communities in which they live.

DHA is always keen to ensure that community concerns are addressed. While assessing planning concerns is the direct responsibility of the Newcastle City Council (NCC), DHA has worked closely with Council and provided expert consultant support and advice. We understand that all matters now re-raised by

the Adamstown Community Forum have been previously considered by the NCC following public meetings. The NCC views are expressed in a letter to DHA dated 18 February 2003 which says, amongst other things:

“As part of the process Defence Housing Authority has provided a significant contribution to two community forum meetings and two briefings to Newcastle Council. It is also acknowledged that Defence Housing Authority has assisted Council in the development of guidelines by providing key consultants who have had the expertise to address issues raised by the community and Council’s vision for a sustainable City.”

The results of the various studies commissioned by DHA were provided to the PWC as Supporting Evidence under cover of my letter dated 21 February 2003. They do not support any of the views expressed by the Adamstown Community Forum.

### **Adamstown Resident Action Group Submission**

The assertions by the Adamstown Resident Action Group are very similar to those made by the Adamstown Community forum and the response above is equally applicable. There is additional mention of safety concerns because of the proximity of the proposed DHA development to the Merewether Golf Club, but many existing Adamstown residences share boundary with the Merewether Golf Club and are fully exposed to the activities within the Golf Club. Again, it must be said that the open space designated on the DHA master plan proposal is viewed by NCC as an appropriate “buffer zone” between the Golf Course and the new development.

Yours Sincerely,

Richard Bear  
General Manager – Development & Sales

28<sup>th</sup> February 2003