
Members
Parliamentary Public Works Committee
Public Hearing
Re: Staged Development of Robertson Barracks

Dear Members

I understand that you are in Darwin to hear submissions regarding the next stage of development at Robertson Barracks and that you will accept submissions from the public.

I also understand that it is the role of the Members to ensure that the next stage of development at Robertson Barracks will not impact on the amenity of the surrounding area or to the community.

First and foremost, we are supporters of the current location of the Barracks and of the Government policy to expand Defence assets in the North of Australia, but it is incumbent on Government and the Members of this Committee to ensure that our public monies are expended in a way that is beneficial, not only to the needs of defence objectives of Australia; but also to defence personnel and the inhabitants of the local community.

It is in this regard that I am concerned that the traffic routes to Robertson Barracks should be given detailed consideration in the overall planning of this current expansion to the Barracks. I don't believe this has happened.

Currently and before any further expansion, the Barracks are accessed via two main routes. One route is via Campbell Road in Knuckeyes Lagoon and the other is via Thorngate Road off the Stuart Highway near Palmerston.

As residents of Knuckey Lagoon with our residence on the intersection of Stevens, Brandt and Campbell Roads we are primarily concerned with the current traffic flows and incidents that occur at this point. Traffic going to Robertson Barracks via Brandt and Stevens Road between 6.30am and 8.00am and exiting between 3.00pm and 5.00pm is literally bumper to bumper and the convergence at this intersection is quite dramatic.

Further to these peak periods, defence vehicles using Brandt, Stevens and Campbell road, are common throughout the day.

The intersection referred to is a definite "black spot" without any stop sign on the western approach from the Barracks and without street lighting at all. Many accidents have occurred at this intersection, more than get reported and some more severe than others; including deaths. (Photo Attached)

We have personally attended accidents, including both motorbikes and passenger vehicles. Most of these have been young service men who for one reason or another have failed to negotiate the intersection.

We are concerned for defence personnel and the danger the current road layout presents to these young men and women, particularly at night when most of the incidences seem to occur. We are also concerned with safety in the local community, but even with road signs indicating "no access to Robertson Barracks via Farrar or Brandt Roads and a 60km speed limit along these roads; many people including defence personnel ignore them.

Speed is a real concern in this area due to the fact that it is a rural domain with horses on most properties and horse riding in the area very popular. Campbell Road is particularly attractive for speedsters as it is a long and straight road terminating at a T intersection with an apparently good left or right fast turn – if the ever occurring squealing of tyres and vehicle incidents are any gauge to go by.

We have built an earth mound inside our boundary facing the T intersection to ensure that approaching fast vehicles that do not manage to take the corner will at least have some assistance in slowing down and stopping before they enter our garden and risk hitting someone or damaging our house. The construction of "the hill" has proved to be to be a wise choice, made when a car landed in the front yard prior to the wall and stopping another vehicle doing the same since the construction. (Photo Included)

We believe it is incumbent on the authorities, local, state and federal to address the current traffic issues as they have already been recognized by those authorities, including the new local Federal Member for Solomon.

With the next stage of expansion for Robertson Barracks the current traffic issues will, without doubt; be exacerbated considerably.

The Parliamentary Public Works Committee is the body that has the clout to ensure that public monies are well spent, to the benefit of all in the community and we have every expectation that our concerns as well as others in the community are given fair consideration.

We encourage the Committee to recommend to Government in the strongest possible terms, that the road access issues to and from Robertson Barracks are addressed as soon as possible to avoid any further injuries or deaths caused by dated infrastructure that cannot support the existing Barrack's needs; let alone one with expanded facilities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Baldwin', written in a cursive style.

TIM BALDWIN

15th April 2008

Attachment

Campbell, Stevens, Brandt Road Intersection

