

**Submission
No 2**

INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL AVIATION SERVICES

Organisation: Lake Macquarie City Council

Date received: 21/01/2014

15 January 2014

The Director
Standing Committee on State Development
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Director

Subject: Submission - Inquiry into Regional Aviation Services

Thank you for your invitation to provide comment to the inquiry into regional aviation services, currently being undertaken by the Standing Committee on State Development.

This submission has been prepared by Council staff, with comments based on previous decisions of the elected Council.

Council is concerned with the site nominated for a possible airport, immediately adjoining its local government boundary within the Wyong local government area. The proposal has been identified with minimal technical input:

- There are no background technical studies into the possible impacts of the airport activity on adjoining urban and rural areas, mineral deposits and existing infrastructure such as the M1 Freeway. For example, the current proposal may result in flight paths directly over the nearby township of Wyee, leading to loss of residential amenity. Wyee is an identified urban release area, supported by a railway station, which is expected to provide additional affordable housing for the Central Coast in the future.
- There are no technical studies to provide guidance on the preferred orientation and length of future runways.
- There are no technical studies indicating likely measures required to ameliorate adverse impacts.

To date, public consultation on the proposed airport has been minimal, and the lack of information has made it difficult for the community to provide informed input. Council supports collaboration with Lower Hunter and Central Coast councils to establish agreed infrastructure objectives and priorities. The location of any future airport and its relationship to other infrastructure priorities, such as the proposed high-speed rail network, should be included in these discussions.

Council wishes to promote the re-establishment of regional aviation services at the existing Belmont airport. Council's Lifestyle 2030 Strategy identifies the Belmont airport for light commuter air services to Sydney and regional locations and for aviation related employment and business activity.

In order to support this, investigations have found that Belmont airport would require a range of upgrades to meet current aviation standards. Commercially sustainable air transport services generally require aircraft with a carrying capacity of 7 to 9 passengers. These types of aircraft weigh above 2000kg and, therefore would require a runway upgrade from 10m to at least 15m wide. In addition to this, the following items have been identified as necessary works to enable the airport to become operational:

- Runway resurface
- Runway widening
- Installation of runway strip markers
- Tree clearing to restore the Transitional Surfaces (Obstacle Limitation Surfaces) – Refurbishment of the Wind Direction Indicators
- Recladding of the Caretaker's residence
- Reroofing of the main hangar
- Removal of hazardous buildings (including disposing of asbestos) and navigational aids

The anticipated cost to bring Belmont airport to current CASA standards, and the removal of hazardous materials, is currently prohibitive. Council would like to alleviate the current impediments to re-establishing aviation services at Belmont.

Should you require further information, please contact

Yours sincerely

Brian Bell
General Manager