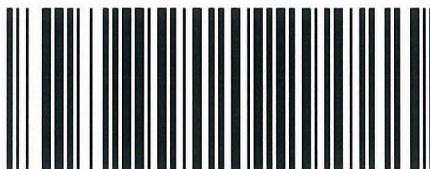




Australian Government

Department of Defence

Defence Support Group



PCU012765

ID/EP/ELP/OUT/75/2012/AF12493287

Ms Sally Munk

Senior Environmental Planner

Metropolitan and Regional Projects

Department of Planning and Infrastructure

GPO Box 39

SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Ms Munk

RE: EXHIBITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR INTEGRATED RESIDENTIAL AND TOURIST DEVELOPMENT, COMBERTON GRANGE, NOWRA (06-0135)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Part 3A Environmental Assessment Concept Plan proposal for the Shaolin Temple integrated residential and tourist development, located to the south of Nowra. The Department of Defence (Defence) understands that the proposed Concept Plan Application will facilitate the proposed development to be permissible under the Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan.

Defence has a long association with the Shoalhaven community and owns a number of properties and facilities both within and adjacent to the Local Government Area (LGA). HMAS *Albatross* is the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) premier aviation operations and training facility. It provides operational, training, engineering, administrative and logistic support to the RAN's helicopter squadrons. It is the only airfield operated by the RAN in Australia. The proximity of the base to the Eastern Australia Exercise Area (EAXA) is essential in meeting operational flying training and Fleet support tasks, while the Jervis Bay Airfield (JBAF), to the south east of the base; offers a basic helicopter training landing site, and fixed-wing aircraft access for the conduct of over-water parachute training.

The capability of HMAS Albatross will significantly increase in the future, both through; the introduction of the Australia Defence Force (ADF) Helicopter Aircrew Training System in 2017, and through the acquisition of an increased number of new Maritime Combat Helicopters. The increased activity at the Base will produce more frequent flying activity in the local area, including over the Shaolin Temple site which is located along the flight corridor between HMAS Albatross and the Jervis Bay Training Area. Also, the introduction of Night Vision Devices will increase instances of low level flying of night.

Defence has previously provided comments in relation to the issuing of Director General's Requirements for this Concept Plan (July 2008). Defence reiterates previous comments in relation to aircraft noise with the current proposal, refer to Attachment A. Defence has also expressed concerns regarding the impact of aircraft noise on the development to Shoalhaven City Council.

Defence is concerned about the aircraft noise impacts that may affect the proposed Shaolin Temple tourist and residential development. Defence has previously undertaken noise assessment on the site which concluded that a significant proportion of the Shaolin Temple development site is within the 70dB(A) contour.

The issue of aircraft noise has been considered in the Environmental Assessment report submitted with the Concept Plan application. The Proponent, has also commissioned a noise and vibration assessment report prepared by Wilkinson Murray which indicates that noise levels measured on the site (37-56 dBA) are lower than that predicted by Defence. Defence is concerned at the limitations of the report prepared by Wilkinson Murray, specifically that the noise monitoring was limited to a three day period and the number of helicopter transits identified is significantly smaller than the number provided by Defence. I also note, that the Wilkinson Murray Noise and Vibration Assessment report recommends that the noise levels predicted by The Acoustic Group (58-70 dBA) be adopted for design purposes, Defence would be supportive of this approach.


In Defence's experience, noise sensitive land uses in close proximity to established flight paths may lead to future complaints. Defence cannot readily modify or curtail activities due to potential exposure to noise resulting from subsequent noise sensitive uses near established flight paths. Should the application proceed, Defence will not be responsible for any future liabilities for future noise complaints in relation to military aircraft noise.

Defence does not object to the proposal, provided that conditions to attenuate the development from aircraft noise be included in any approval of the Concept Plan and that attenuation requirements are fully considered in the design stage of the proposal. This will help reduce future land use conflict by ensuring that the Proponent addresses the building requirements for attenuation in accordance with the Australian Standard. In addition, appropriate notations should be incorporated into planning certificates that may be issued under section 149 of the *NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Should you wish to discuss the content of this submission further please contact Mr Tim Hogan on telephone (02) 6266 8540 or email on lpsi.directorate@defence.gov.au

Yours sincerely



 **Simone Murray**
Director External Land Planning
Department of Defence
PO Box 7925
CANBERRA BC ACT 2610

December 2012

Cc. BSM HMAS Albatross
CO HMAS Albatross