



The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP
Minister for Water, Property and Housing

IM19/12277

Ms Helen Minnican
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Helen

Dear Ms Minnican

I refer to the petition lodged by Ms Trish Doyle MP, Member for Blue Mountains, presented in the Legislative Assembly on 30 May 2019, asking that Katoomba Airfield is incorporated into the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, to be managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as an emergency airfield.

Katoomba Airfield is located on Crown land at Medlow Bath, around 10 km from the township of Katoomba. The existing runways, which are currently unsealed, limit the use of the airfield by fixed wing aircraft. Helicopter operations into and out of the airfield are permitted, provided the Aerodrome Operator is notified in advance.

In 2017 the Department of Industry (the department) held an expression of interest (EOI) process to establish public interest in managing and/or developing the site. The EOI process outlines that a licence would allow the preferred tenant to occupy and clean up the site, as well as prepare a business case and application for a subsequent lease. The department identified a suitable tenant and granted a licence. In January 2019, the tenant's company submitted a lease application and business case to the department.

Under the *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, an approved Community Engagement Strategy must be implemented prior to the grant of any lease of Crown land. The Community Engagement Strategy sets out how Crown Lands is engaging with the community and stakeholders to provide information about the proposed lease and to seek input on the proposal.

Community consultation is currently underway. The department held four sessions over two drop in days on 19 and 25 June 2019 at the Hotel Blue & Conference Centre in Katoomba, to enable the community to review the proposal, comment and ask further questions.

In addition, the proposal is being exhibited and is open for comments from 9 June 2019 to 4 August 2019, on the department's website (www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands/public/on-exhibition/proposed-lease-of-katoomba-airfield). A fact sheet and frequently-asked questions is available from the department's website.

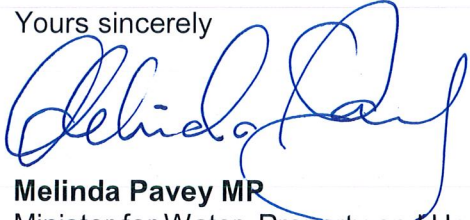
Stakeholders, including the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, NTSCORP Limited and the Blue Mountains City Council, have been formally notified of consultation arrangements. A notice has been published in the Blue Mountains Gazette advising of the public submission period and the information sessions.

The department will also consult further with other government agencies including the National Parks and Wildlife Services.

Issues raised in the community consultation will be carefully considered before any decisions are made in relation to granting any new commercial lease. The department will prepare a report that identifies issues raised in feedback and submissions. Each issue will be considered in depth, focusing on whether the concerns raised can be dealt with in the proposed lease.

I trust this information is of assistance. If you require additional information, Mr Scott Mullen, Senior Project Manager, Commercial Services in Crown Lands, can be contacted on (02) 9842 8345.

Yours sincerely



02 JUL 2019

Melinda Pavey MP
Minister for Water, Property and Housing

cc: Ms Trish Doyle MP, Member for Blue Mountains