



NEW HELIPAD RECEIVES CONDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSENT

3 August 2022

The operator of a new Helipad at Penrith Lakes will be required to comply with reduced hours of operation and flights, stick to an annual cap of helicopter movements and limit take-off and landing activities to reduce noise impacts after receiving conditional approval from the Independent Planning Commission.

Heliport Developers Pty Ltd sought permission for the operation of a helipad facility, located in the Penrith Lakes precinct in Western Sydney.

The Department of Planning and Environment completed a whole-of-government assessment of the Penrith Lakes Helipad, which is located in a State significant precinct, and the application came to the Commission for decision under Ministerial delegation after more than 50 unique submissions objecting to the proposed development were received. The Commission sought further public submissions and held a public meeting in June 2022 to hear the community's view on the proposal.

The two-member Commission panel, comprising Chris Wilson (Chair) and Dr Sheridan Coakes, has today (3 August 2022) determined to grant development consent to the Project, subject to 94 conditions.

The Commission's Statement of Reasons for its decision states:

"The Commission finds that the Project should be approved, subject to conditions of consent, for the following reasons:

- the Site is located on land zoned Tourism and the development is permissible with consent under Chapter 5 – Penrith Lakes Scheme of the Western Parkland City SEPP;
- the Project complies with the strategic planning directions of State and Local planning policies;
- the Project will facilitate economic and social benefits for Western City District residents by providing aircraft services in a location that supports the tourism and utility industries, and providing emergency service operations as needed;
- environmental impacts have been avoided and mitigated where possible; and
- residual impacts on surrounding land uses are capable of being managed through conditions of consent."

In handing down its decision, the Commission considered permissibility, operational matters, noise and vibration, site selection, hazards, traffic, biodiversity, heritage, flooding, social and economic impacts.

The Commission has set strict conditions which reduce the proposed hours of operation, set an annual limit for the total number of helicopter flights, limit take-off and landing activities in the vicinity of the closest residential properties, and provide a mechanism for additional acoustic mitigation measures at those properties.

Heliport Developers Pty Ltd had sought approval for operating hours from 5:30am to 10:00pm, however the Commission has limited general operating hours to 7:00am to 10:00pm with a limited number of movements between sunset and 10:00pm (excluding emergency services operations), primarily to enable pilots to maintain night-time flying accreditation.

Heliport Developers Pty Ltd is also required to prepare a Communication Consultation Strategy to facilitate effective communication and responses with key stakeholders for the life of the development.

Panel Chair Chris Wilson said:

“These conditions are designed to prevent, minimise and/or offset adverse social and environmental impacts, and ensure ongoing monitoring and appropriate environmental management of the development.”

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This media statement has been prepared for general information only. It does not form part of the Commission's Statement of Reasons for Decision, and should not be read as part of, or as a substitute for, that Statement of Reasons for Decision.