

FLORA

Farming Land over Relocation of Airport

Minutes of Meeting

Held at the Bortolo Pavilion, Greenfields WA on 14th December 2006.

The meeting commenced at 7.35pm

Chairman: Mr Ken Elliott

The Chairman thanked the following visitors for attending:

Senator Judith Adams

The Hon. Don Randall (MHR)

Murray Cowper (MLA for Murray)

Tony Simpson (MLA for Serpentine Jarrahdale)

Glenys Godfrey (Mayor of Belmont)

Denise Needham (President; Serpentine Jarrahdale Shire Council)

Morris Bessant (Murray Shire Councillor)

Mr Drew Gaynor (Aviation and Airports Dept of Planning and Infrastructure)

Councillor Peter Kane Mandurah City Council Nth Ward

Councillor John Hughes Mandurah City Council

Leigh Hardingham (ARID Group / Ascot Capital)

Apologies were received from:

Hon. Mark Vaillie (Federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services)

Hon. Alannah MacTiernan MLA (State Minister for Planning and Infrastructure)

The Hon Kim Beasley, MHR

Dr. Kim Hames, MLA

Judy Moylan MHR

Mark McGowan, MLA

Hon Kim Chance MLA Minister for Agriculture,
Mayor Paddi Creevey, Mandurah Shire Council.

President Noel Nancarrow, Councillor Hilda White Murray Shire Council

Michael Braybrook, President Jandakot Airport Chamber of Commerce

Dr Sally Talbot MLC

The Hon David Templeman MLA Minister for Community Development

Gary Gaunt, Secretary, Jandakot Airport Chamber of Commerce provided an update on the state of play regarding the mooted closure of Jandakot Airport. He said the JACC represents over 98% of businesses based at Jandakot Airport and outlined a range of negative impacts that the airport relocation debate is having on those businesses.

He said there are many obstacles at Federal Government level to the relocation. The Senate Estimates Committee recently addressed issues of safety and congestion and Hansard records that there are in fact no such issues driving relocation of the airport. Hansard also recorded that there are no plans to relocate Jandakot Airport.

Ascot Capital recently announced that they were in discussions with the State Government but the Government has advised that they are NOT.

The State Government has advised informally that they cannot take any formal action in regard to the airport relocation until the Federal Government decides to support such a proposal.

JACC has evidence that Jandakot Airport Holdings is not fulfilling its obligations under the Jandakot Airport Master Plan.

JACC is keeping pressure on State and Federal ministers to fulfill their respective obligations in regard to the various Acts.

Mr Gaunt stressed that although we think we are close to stopping the Keysbrook proposal, we cannot take our eyes off the ball.

An attendee commented that there has been almost no public information about the proposal and questioned who is behind it.

Leigh Hardingham (ARID Group / Ascot Capital) rose to defend Ascot's position. She advised that the proposal is still at a very early stage and has a long way to go before it will be ready to submit for Government approvals. She advised that it may not even be ready until after the end of 2007.

Attendee **Judy Yaeshire** (sp??) asked "If the proposal is not about a land swap then what is it about?"

Leigh Hardingham responded that she appreciates the community's concerns. She then produced a map comparing distances from Jandakot Airport with similar distance circles from the proposed Keysbrook site. The message was that the impact on Mandurah town will be minimal.

Gary Gaunt pointed out on the same map the excellent road network and user base around Jandakot Airport, which was in stark contrast to the large distances and lack of roads to Keysbrook. He also mentioned that 60% of the Jandakot Airport's customers live north of the river.

Frank Hewitt, resident asked why we don't insist that Jandakot Airport Holdings and Ascot Capital just run the current airport and forget about moving it.

Monica Findley from North Dandalup asked who is going to compensate the land owners whose properties are devalued by proximity to the new airport?

Keith Burrow, Baldivis Community Association asked if Ascot has considered developing a new airport in the Pearce area north of Perth.

Leigh Hardingham responded that they have looked extensively for a site north of Perth but found it impossible due to interaction with the military air base at Pearce.

Alan Elliott, Keysbrook resident, noted that the projected air traffic at Keysbrook would be double the present level at Jandakot.

Gary Gaunt advised that the people responsible for planning locations for airports are the Federal and State Governments. It is not within the Gift of Ascot Capital to be canvassing relocation of the airport. They have the right to develop proposals but they have no inherent right to actually relocate the airport.

Robyn Edwards, private pilot and aircraft owner, asked what right do Ascot Capital / Jandakot Airport Holdings have to even discuss selling Jandakot Airport.

Leigh Hardingham advised that Ascot are preparing a brief for major improvements to the State's General Aviation industry. She said many improvements are already under way at Jandakot and Ascot are certainly not focusing their attention only on the relocation.

There was some general discussion about the Jandakot Airport Master Plan and Ascot Capital's apparent disagreement with its contents.

Gary Gaunt said Ascot Capital didn't just inherit the Master Plan. They actually paid \$43 million for it. He said the Airports Act was put in place with mechanisms designed to ensure that the airport is protected and maintained. When Ascot bought into Jandakot they knew exactly what was in the Master Plan. The Master Plan shows that Jandakot can handle projected traffic growth out to 2025.

A Resident said somebody was making purchase offers on the land at Keysbrook long before Ascot Capital took over the Jandakot lease.

Trish Dicks, a supporter of Jandakot Airport, said that at one of the Community Consultative meetings one of Ascot's Directors clearly stated that their primary interest was in redevelopment of the real estate at Jandakot.

Another attendee said he wished Ascot would acknowledge that their proposal has no hope and would announce an end to it.

Gary Gaunt said Ascot Capital had refused to discuss Ascot's vision with the Jandakot tenants on an equal footing.

Leigh Hardingham took issue with JACC's stance. She said all tenants she has spoken to have said that JACC does not represent them. She said the majority of tenants have agreed to accept incentives to move if the airport is relocated. She said she has met with all tenants except the largest ones such as RFDS and Royal Aero Club.

Robyn Edwards said that a friend, one of the Jandakot tenants, had been shaken by the attitude and approach of the Ascot Capital people.

Joan Saville from Silver Sands, has a brother working at Jandakot. He says there is nobody at Jandakot who wants the airport to move.

Leigh Hardingham reported that the behaviour of the Jandakot Airport Chamber of Commerce has been disgraceful. Gary Gaunt asked her to elaborate and she admitted that she has not been at any of the meetings where the alleged disgraceful behaviour occurred.

Min Stokes, flying school owner at Jandakot, said she has not been asked for a meeting by Leigh or Ascot. She said most tenants have been offered large sums of money to "go away".

Leigh Hardingham said there are two sides to every story.

Attendee **Geoff Fawcett** asked "what would the benefits of relocating the airport for the Keysbrook people."

Leigh Hardingham replied "I've no comment." She said she is not at the meeting to present Ascot's case. Ascot will present their brief when it is ready.

An attendee asked why Ascot have been in dialog only with local residents around the proposed site and not with the wider community including Mandurah. He said local residents must fight this battle.

Morris Bessant, Murray Shire, said he supports all sides of the story, your side, my side and the truth. He said prior to Ascot Capital taking over the Jandakot Airport lease, the airport was losing around \$1 million per year. Ascot must have worked out a business plan before buying the lease. He said their plan is to increase student numbers from the present 200 based at Jandakot to 3000 at Keysbrook. In contrast to Ascot's plans, the long-established Stevenson Plan for the metropolitan region provided for a second general aviation airport north of Perth.

Leigh Hardingham said Ascot's investment was justified by development of the surrounding light industrial land. Some tenants are keen to expand their businesses and Ascot are advising them to proceed as if the airport would remain at Jandakot. Ascot was reassuring them that they would be adequately compensated if the airport did eventually move.

Phil Maley, private pilot and aircraft owner, asked if banks and other lending institutions are still willing to lend money to business owners at Jandakot.

Leigh Hardingham said she does not know.

An attendee reiterated that there is almost no information about the proposed relocation available to the public.

Marion Elliott said the proposed airport would be at her back fence and asked Leigh Hardingham to tell Ascot that that "We don't want your airport."

And a question to Don Randall asking if he would support his constituents who have chosen to live in a quiet area near the proposed airport location.

She also advised that her family is protecting 320 acres of valuable native bushland which would be severely threatened by an airport development.

Don Randall, Federal MHR, Canning, noted firstly that there were no Labor Party representatives at the meeting. He went on to explain that he has to represent all of his constituents who have a diverse range of views. He noted that there is no formal proposal before the Government but since learning of the debate he has talked to all sides and now concludes that "This issue is a dead duck". He went on to read a letter sent by the Minister Mark Vaile to the Directors of Ascot Capital yesterday. A copy is appended.

Don said he totally supports what the Minister has said and congratulates the people who have campaigned so long and hard to achieve this outcome.

Senator Judith Evans said she has worked very hard towards this outcome through petitions and the Senate Estimates process and wholeheartedly supports what the Minister has said.

John Hughes, Shire of Mandurah said that if the Minister's letter had been presented early in the meeting it would have saved a lot of pointless discussion and especially a lot of embarrassment for Ms Hardingham.

Don Randall clarified that under the meeting protocol he was not invited to speak until then.

Bruce Ivers, a sub-tenant at Jandakot, said Hoxton Park airport was due to close in 2008. He asked if we could learn anything from the process there. He also commented that the ARID web site was the only significant source of public information about the proposed relocation. He said the present uncertainty is holding him back from development of a new aviation enterprise.

Robyn Edwards mentioned the other web site

<http://www.jandakotairportrelocation.org.au/>. Bruce said he was familiar with that too but it contained little detail about Ascot's proposal.

Irene Cook, meeting convener, proposed the following motion:

"This meeting does not support the relocation of Jandakot Airport and Jandakot Airport Holdings Pty Ltd should be directed to operate Jandakot Airport in accordance with the Master Plan."

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Philip Maley noted that nothing in the Minister's letter prevented Ascot Capital from continuing to pursue their objective and to submit a development application.

Don Randall acknowledged that but said Ascot would be "stupid" to proceed. He said if Ascot cannot make Jandakot Airport viable where it is, then they should sell it to somebody else.

Gary Gaunt made a statement that Jandakot Airport Chamber of Commerce has behaved with complete propriety at all times and totally rejects assertions by Leigh Hardingham to the contrary.

Murray Cowper said there are still issues to be addressed in the Keysbrook / Murray area including pressure to allow sand mining, and proposed development of the Amarillo residential estate.

The Chairman requested that citizens continue to write letters to all levels of government opposing the airport development.

There being no further business the meeting was closed that 9.18pm.