

Peregrine Mixed Use Major Development (Helipad)

Public Information Session Summary

Two public information sessions were held by the Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) at the Norwood Town Hall on Tuesday 18 February 2020 at 1pm and 5pm as part of the major development assessment process for the amendment to the Peregrine Mixed Use Development to establish a helicopter landing facility (270 The Parade Kensington). Approximately 180 people attended the meetings.

The information session included presentations on the development process and what is proposed by a representative of DPTI as well as presentations by representatives of Peregrine and their consultants about the variation proposal for the helicopter landing facility (helipad). A question and answer session was facilitated at the end of the presentations. URPS provided independent facilitation of the meetings.

To aid feedback, large posters were provided on each table on to which people could provide written feedback at any time in relation to the following questions:

- What are your issues and concerns about the Helipad application?
- Is there anything that could be done to address your issues or concerns?

During the question and answer, feedback was also recorded on a whiteboard.

This report summarises the planning themes of feedback related to the application itself received across both information sessions gathered via the table posters and the facilitated question and answer sessions.

Key themes of issues and concerns

Not appropriate in a residential area

The most common feedback from people at the meetings was that a helipad for private and commercial use was not appropriate in a residential, built up area (with residents, schools, nursing home, church etc nearby) where impacts would negatively affect the amenity, liveability and safety of the neighbourhood. People do not want a precedent to be set.

It was also considered that a helipad was inappropriate for that location given its proximity to the nearby heritage areas.

Noise and vibration

Another frequent concern raised was the potential level of noise created by helicopters and that this level of noise was inappropriate in a predominantly residential area. The need for quiet at the neighbouring church was raised, particularly during funerals, wedding and other events. It was considered that the noise created by the helicopters would compound the already significant noise generated by Portrush Road traffic. Related to the noise concern was the impact of vibration on properties, especially heritage buildings and stained glass windows in the neighbouring church.

People living in the nearby apartments considered that the noise impacts would be greater for them as they were living at higher levels, closer to the helipad rather than at ground level.

Some also questioned the assumptions underpinning the noise modelling and considered the noise levels would be much more than what was projected by the acoustic report, particularly when combined with existing traffic noise at that location.

Safety

Another key concern was the safety risks posed by the helipad. It was considered that most air crashes happen on take-off and landing and given that the location is a highly populated area posed an increased risk to residents and others located in the area and flight path.

The identification of nearby schools and open space for emergency landings was considered highly inappropriate and would put children at risk. Some also raised the issue of helicopters distracting drivers and causing accidents and of the carcinogenic impacts of aviation fire fighting foam.

Lack of benefit to the community

Many people felt that the helipad was inappropriate as it provided no broader community benefit (eg. for community health or safety) but was for the sole benefit of business and the select few who would use it (eg. “rich” motorsport enthusiasts and the Shahin family), and that the community was going to be negatively impacted for business/private gain.

Some also questioned the economic benefit of the helipad for the broader community, and considered it an “indulgence”.

Frequency of take-off and landings

Many wanted more information on the frequency of take-off and landings on the 10 days per year that have been applied for, noting that on those 10 days there could be multiple take offs and landings which would impact the amenity and safety of residents and others nearby. People were distrustful that take-offs and landings would be limited to 10 days per year and that no details were able to be provided at the meetings by the applicant regarding the frequency of movements on those days.

People questioned who would “police” compliance with the 10 day limit and what the penalty would be if the 10 day limit was exceeded. Some also wanted to know if residents would be notified of the days the helipad would be used and would there be a schedule publicly available in advance.

Why not use existing helipads or city buildings – not required at this location

Many commented that it was not necessary to have a helipad in suburban “Norwood” when there are existing helipads in the city (or vacant buildings in the city) and at the airport that could be used. Some also questioned “what is the need for two helipads?” on the site, and were sceptical regarding the emergency landing pad identified on the plans and felt that it would also come into use in the future, further exacerbating negative impacts on residents.

People also questioned the applicant’s reason for needing a helipad to transport visitors to Taillem Bend and other nearby tourist destinations such as the Barossa, and considered that the airport located 20 minutes from the city should be used instead.

Authenticity of engagement

Some people questioned the authenticity of how they had been engaged. In particular, that they had not been involved earlier in the project's development, or that they weren't being listened to and that the decision was a "fait accompli" (already made) even though "all" the community is opposed to the development. Some questioned whether the operators of sites identified as emergency landing sites such as schools and been appropriately engaged.

People also expressed frustration and displeasure at the meetings regarding the lack of information provided by the applicant and the inability to answer questions during the meetings regarding technical aspects of the application such as the number of times the helipad would be used on the 10 days per year, how Peregrine would keep account of the level of use and the broader community benefit.

Size and overshadowing

Some raised concerns regarding the size of the already approved Peregrine development and the overshadowing impacts on adjacent properties.

Reduced property values

A few raised concerns that the approved building development and impacts of the proposed helipad would lead to a decline in the property values of nearby properties.

Ideas for addressing concerns

A few suggestions were made at the tables about how community concerns could be addressed. These comments mainly identified that to address their concerns, the application for the helipad should be declined or to use alternative sites (eg. the airport).

Suggestions for addressing the concerns if the helipad was approved were for Peregrine to:

- Repair all damage to buildings caused by the helipad
- Compensate for the loss of property values
- Give advance notice of flight days and times to residents and other stakeholder adjacent the development or in its flight path to be.