



Office of
Environment
& Heritage

ED18/1134

Ms Madi Maclean
President
Blue Mountains Conservation Society

By email: president@bluemountains.org.au

Dear Ms Maclean

Thank you for your recent letter about Katoomba Airfield. I appreciate the Blue Mountains Conservation Society's strong record of environmental advocacy and thank you for bringing these issues to my attention.

As you are aware, the Department of Industry (DoI) Crown Lands continue to have statutory responsibility over the area. The airfield is under a three-year lease arrangement, which commenced in February 2018. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has indicated to DoI a willingness to consider rationalisation of the airfield and National Park boundary. However, any consideration of inclusion of the airfield in National Park would require consultation with key stakeholders. DoI is aware of NPWS' interest in participating in any consultation it leads around the future of the airfield.

I understand the Society's concerns around environmental impacts associated with the airfield including weed invasion, sedimentation and the risk of pollutants entering the park, and can confirm that the NPWS has raised these issues with DoI. I also note the airfield must continue to be available and managed for bushfire and emergency use on an ongoing basis.

The Office of Environment and Heritage notes the Society's concerns around the potential impacts of low level or inappropriate scenic flights over Blue Mountains National Park. NPWS has committed to working with stakeholders including DoI to address these. I note that NPWS does not have any powers to regulate the use of any aircraft flying in the airspace over the park. This is solely the responsibility of Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

I also note your concerns over the road access into the Airfield. As the majority of the road accessing the airfield is excluded from Blue Mountains National Park, it is not maintained by NPWS. I note you have also written to DoI and trust you will find its response satisfactory.

OEH will continue to provide input to land use and management options for the Katoomba Airfield as part of processes managed by DoI. If you have any further questions please contact Mr David Crust, Blue Mountains Branch Director on 47 847300 or at david.crust@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Lean
Chief Executive

21.12.2018