

12.4 MINUTES - EXTRAORDINARY TUMUT AERODROME COMMITTEE - 27 MAY 2025 - ATTACHMENTS

Attachment Titles:

1. Minutes - Extraordinary Tumut Aerodrome Committee Meeting - 27 May 2025
2. RFS - Forestry - Joint Development - Fire Control Centre - Tumut Aerodrome - SVC Signed Heads of Agreement 2 May 2024
3. Helicopter Hangar - Floor Plan
4. Helicopter Hangar - Site Diagram
5. Enquiry and Response - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - Mayor & Deputy Commissioner Strategic Cap NSW RFS - Redacted

Attachment 1 - 20250527 - Minutes - Extraordinary Tumut Aerodrome Committee



Notice of Meeting

**EXTRAORDINARY TUMUT
AERODROME COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 27 May 2025 at 4:00 PM
Riverina Room, 76 Capper Street Tumut

MINUTES

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1. COMMENCING AT:

4pm.

In accordance with Councils Committees Operations Manual an Extraordinary Meeting of the Tumut Aerodrome Committee can be called to discuss an urgent matter of business. At the last Tumut Aerodrome Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 13 May 2025, it was discussed and agreed by all Committee members that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee should be called as soon as possible to discuss the proposed construction of a new Hangar facility at the Tumut Aerodrome.

The relevant extract from Councils Committees Operations Manual is below:

Extraordinary Meeting

An extraordinary meeting of the committee may be called to discuss urgent business and/or matters outside the scope of an ordinary meeting. An Extraordinary Meeting must be requested by at least two (2) members of the committee. An agenda will be prepared and circulated to all members of the committee at least two (2) days prior to the meeting. No other business will be discussed at this meeting other than that of the urgent business.

2. PRESENT:

Cr John Larter (Councillor Delegate), Fred Kell, Bridget Ryan, Craig Cullinger, Peter Wilson, Tom Moxey, Tony Clee (President Tumut Aero Club & TROE), Glenyce Francis.

Dean Anderson – Chair - Softwoods Working Group

Carli Porteous – General Manager - Softwoods Working Group

Duncan Mitchell - Director Infrastructure & Works (Council Delegate).

Observers: Mayor Julia Ham, Cr Hugh Packard (Deputy Mayor), Cr Grant Hardwick (Alt. Delegate).

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

An acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the land was delivered by Duncan Mitchell - Director Infrastructure & Works.

4. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Jon Gregory - Rural Fire Service.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:

Pecuniary / Non-Pecuniary Interests Forms were issued at the meeting.

Note: After quite a lengthy discussion amongst the committee about Pecuniary Interest at the Ordinary Meeting of the Committee - it was noted that most committee members have a pecuniary interest one way or the other.

It should also be noted that Committee members don't choose to be members of the Committee to fetter a direct financial or non-financial benefit – they choose to be Committee members because they are genuinely interested and passionate about the Tumut Aerodrome. Members are not seeking benefit via their affiliation with the committee – that is not the intent of their membership. Through circumstances that are unavoidable and completely understandable the members of the committee are users of the

aerodrome – neighbours (Property owners) adjacent to the aerodrome and or business operators at the aerodrome. If it wasn't for their passion or membership, then its highly likely the committee wouldn't exist.

The purpose of the explanation of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest at this committee meeting was to simply raise the matter and provide some clarity around the issue. Committee members now have an understanding of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interest if they didn't have one beforehand and there is always the opportunity to declare an interest if they feel inclined to do so as per this standing item on the agenda and forms provided.

Refer to the Minutes of the Ordinary Tumut Aerodrome Meeting held 13 May 2025 for the detailed explanation on Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests provided by Duncan Mitchell - Director Infrastructure & Works.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

At the last Ordinary meeting of the Tumut Aerodrome Committee held on Tuesday 13 May 2025, it was discussed and agreed by all Committee members that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee should be called as soon as possible to discuss the proposed construction of a new hangar facility at the Tumut Aerodrome.

It was proposed at the meeting that representatives from the Softwoods Working Group and the NSW Rural Fire Service should address the Committee to answer any questions Committee members have on the proposed new hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome that is being funded as part of a \$13 million Plantation Fire Protection Fund awarded to the Local Government Areas of Albury, Greater Hume, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Snowy Valleys (Wagga Wagga was added through the process) by the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Tara Moriarty.

Resolution from the Ordinary meeting of the Tumut Aerodrome Committee held on Tuesday 13 May 2025:

THAT THE COMMITTEE:

1. **Receive the report in relation to the Extraordinary Committee meeting that has been called to discuss the proposed construction of a new hangar facility at the Tumut Aerodrome that is being funded as part of a \$13 million Plantation Fire Protection Fund awarded to the Local Government Areas of Albury, Greater Hume, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Snowy Valleys.**
2. **Representatives from the Softwoods Working Group and the NSW Rural Fire Service address the Committee to answer any questions Committee members have on the proposed new grant funded Hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome.**

7. BUSINESS ARISING:

Background

The proposed new hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome is part of a \$13 million Plantation Fire Protection Fund awarded to the Local Government Areas of Albury, Greater Hume, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Snowy Valleys (Wagga Wagga was added through the process) by the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Tara Moriarty.

The Softwoods Working Group has strongly advocated on behalf of its members for enhanced protection for the region given the devastation of 2019-2020 fires.

Snowy Valleys Council is the grant applicant for the Hangar proportion of the \$13 million Plantation Fire Protection Fund which is \$3,850,000 for the construction of the new hangar facility at Tumut aerodrome. The intent of the project is to establish a hangar facility strategically located near vulnerable softwood plantations, where a heavy helicopter capable of carrying large quantities of water (e.g., a Blackhawk)

could be engaged and based during periods of heightened fire risk. This helicopter could be positioned at the Tumut Aerodrome by any stakeholder.

Council Reports and Resolutions since 17 October 2024

Council at its meeting held on 21 November 2024 received a report (Item 11.3) on the proposed hangar facility and the Murray Region Fire Protection Grant. The report contained background information on the proposal, previous resolutions of Council and the Financial Implications for Council in relation to the construction of a new hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome. At that meeting Council resolved the following:

Cr Hayes left the meeting at 5.45pm and returned at 5.47pm.

11.3. MURRAY REGION FIRE PROTECTION GRANT – TUMUT AERODROME HANGAR

M272/24 RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL:

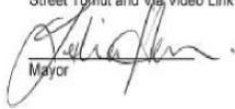
1. Approve the submission of the Tumut Aerodrome Hangar Project under the Murray Region Fire Protection Grant;
2. Seek assurance that the locally based fire-fighting capacity currently available to the region will not be diminished by the addition of the hangar; and
3. Advocate for a longer-term contract for locally based fire-fighting services as offered to other bodies.

Cr Wortes/Cr Packard

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Snowy Valleys Council Ordinary Meeting held in the Council Chambers 76 Capper Street Tumut and Via Video Link on Thursday, 21 November 2024


Mayor


Interim General Manager

8. AGENDA ITEMS:

8.1. PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW HANGAR FACILITY AT THE TUMUT AERODROME

Items discussed at the meeting:

The Director of Infrastructure and Works opened the meeting with introductions acknowledging that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Hardwick, and Councillor Larter were in attendance.

The Director also introduced the members of the Softwoods Working Group who were in attendance. This included Dean Anderson – Chair - Softwoods Working Group and Carli Porteous – General Manager - Softwoods Working Group (attended via teams).

The Director of Infrastructure and Works explained the purpose of the Extraordinary Meeting and why it had been called. The key reason the meeting had been called was to have Representatives from the Softwoods Working Group and the NSW Rural Fire Service address the Committee to answer any questions Committee members have on the proposed new grant funded Hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome. The Hangar is being funded as part of a \$13 million Plantation Fire Protection Fund awarded to the Local Government Areas of Albury, Greater Hume, Cootamundra-Gundagai and Snowy Valleys.

The Director then handed over to Dean Anderson and Carli Porteous from the Softwoods Working Group to address the meeting.

Dean Anderson opened discussion in relation to the background of the Plantation Fire Protection Fund which was established to oversee a budget of \$12.9 million for better protection of plantation assets. Dean explained – lots of ideas were put down and then these options were solidified, and a prioritisation group was established to decide what was the priority projects.

This group then put the preferred priority projects to Department of Primary Industries (DPI) – who used their Fire Reference Groups to decide which were the priority projects.

DPI then identified the owners of the projects – project owners were responsible for putting the business cases together for each project – A person was engaged to assist project owners with each Business case. These priority projects along with the Business Cases then went to an Evaluation Panel.

The Evaluation Panel was chaired by;

- Chair of the Reference Group
- DPI (Group Director)
- Country Fire Authority representative

The Country Fire Authority Representative had to be engaged because the RFS was a bidder on the priority projects and therefore could not be on the evaluation panel due to any potential conflicts of interest.

Dean stated that an Independent Probity Officer was engaged to oversee the whole process.

The Evaluation Panel went through all the projects and accompanying business cases and then made a recommendation to the Minister.

The Minister then reviewed and signed off on the recommendations. An invite was then sent out to each of the successful project owners (Applicants) inviting each applicant to enter into an agreement with a State. Individual agreements were entered into with each of the project owners outlining how they would deliver each project – what were the milestones and what was the cost.

Once that process was complete - funding deeds were then signed and entered into and the delivery of the project began which is the phase we are in now.

Questions from Committee – did Council approve the projects?

Response: The Mayor answered yes and also stated that the Hangar will be an SVC asset. (Refer to resolution of Council 17 October 2024 in background section of these minutes). The Mayor asked when the hangar is not being used could we (Council) lease it?

Response: Dean Anderson described the “peculiar” arrangement of how Council and the RFS manage assets – Dean used the existing hangars out at the Aerodrome that are on Council Land as an example outlining how they are a Council Asset but are used exclusively by the RFS.

Dean Anderson then went onto mention that the Heads of Agreement Council has entered into for the Fire Control Centre at Tumut Aerodrome (22 March 2024) which clearly showed the Fire Control Centre and a Hangar in Schedule 1 of the Heads of Agreement. Dean mentioned that even back then it was clear the hangar – along with the Fire Control Centre (The buildings) were to be occupied and used by the RFS but they are owned by Council. This is the same arrangement for all the Firefighting sheds around the State.

Questions from the Committee -

How can the Aerodrome ever support itself if the assets that are being built at the aerodrome can only be used by the RFS?

Response: Dean Anderson stated that this is a “quirk” in the current state legislation.

General discussion was then had about the fairness of this arrangement – between Councils and the RFS and how this had to change and how there are current movements in state parliament to have the

current legalisation changed so that the cost burden of these RFS asset doesn't vest in Council but vests with the RFS.

Questions from Committee -

If the Hangar goes ahead then there is no rent paid to Council by the RFS?

Response: Dean Anderson – no Council could not rent the Hangar as per the Heads of Agreement.

Background to Heads of Agreement - New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS), Forestry Corporation New South Wales (FCNSW) and Snowy Valleys Council (SVC) Tumut Fire Control Centre Facility

In response to questions raised by the Committee about not knowing that this proposed hanger facility was planned at the Aerodrome - it was stated by Dean Anderson – Softwoods Working Group Chair that Council has entered into a Heads of Agreement with the RFS for the new Tumut Fire Control Centre. In that Heads of Agreement there is a diagram that clearly shows the proposed Hangar and the Fire Control Centre along with other RFS assets arranged on the land that was requested to be provided by Council.

It is confirmed in these minutes that the Heads of Agreement was reported to the previous Council at its meeting held 21 March 2024 - Item 10.2. The resolution from that meeting is below:

Ordinary Council Meeting – Held 21 March 2024:

10.2. PROPOSED FIRE CONTROL CENTRE - HEADS OF AGREEMENT (HOA)

MOTION:

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Approve the Heads of Agreement between Snowy Valleys Council, Forestry Corporation and the NSW Rural Fire Service for the construction of a Fire Control Centre and Forestry Office at the Tumut Aerodrome as included as Attachment 1;
 2. Authorise the Interim General Manager to execute the document on behalf of Council.
- Cr James Hayes/Cr Sam Hughes

AMENDMENT:

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Approve the Heads of Agreement between Snowy Valleys Council, Forestry Corporation and the NSW Rural Fire Service for the construction of a Fire Control Centre and Forestry Office at the Tumut Aerodrome as included as Attachment 1;
2. Ensure that the operation of the Fire Control Centre and Forestry Office does not unnecessarily impede or negatively impact on the recreational or other users of the aerodrome; and
3. Authorise the Interim General Manager to execute the document on behalf of Council.

Cr Trina Thomson

Lapsed due to no seconder

M39/24 RESOLVED to move into Committee of the Whole

Cr Trina Thomson/Cr Mick Ivill

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

M40/24 RESOLVED to move out of Committee of the Whole

Cr James Hayes/Cr Sam Hughes

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

M41/24 RESOLVED:

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Approve the Heads of Agreement between Snowy Valleys Council, Forestry Corporation and the NSW Rural Fire Service for the construction of a Fire Control Centre and Forestry Office at the Tumut Aerodrome as included as Attachment 1;
2. Authorise the Interim General Manager to execute the document on behalf of Council.

Cr James Hayes/Cr Sam Hughes

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes of the Meeting of the Extraordinary Tumut Aerodrome Committee held in Riverina Room, 76 Capper Street Tumut on Tuesday, 27 May 2025

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Councils Director of Infrastructure & Works informed the Committee it is understood that the proposed RFS Fire Control Centre at Tumut Aerodrome has been delayed and the RFS have yet to confirm when works will commence and be completed which is likely to be in future financial years. This delay and the future program for the delivery RFS Fire Control centre at Tumut Aerodrome has not been formally confirmed in writing to Council who signed a Heads of Agreement on 25 March 2024 to provide land at Tumut Aerodrome for the RFS to construct the Fire control Centre.

The current Heads of Agreement that Council has signed is not fully executed as Forestry Corp NSW, who are a signatory to the document have not signed the document. It is understood but not confirmed in writing to Council that Forestry Corp have decided not to move out to Tumut Aerodrome and occupy the new Fire Control Centre as intended in the Heads of Agreement.

Original purpose of the Heads of Agreement (not discussed at the meeting – but background for Committee members)

Council signed a Heads of Agreement on 22 March 2024 with NSW RFS – agreeing to provide land out at Tumut Aerodrome for the construction of a new RFS Fire Control Centre.

The Heads of agreement that Council has signed is based on the following premise:

- NSW RFS requires a new Fire Control Centre within the Snowy Valleys Council local government area, within or near to the township of Tumut.
- FCNSW requires a new area administration facility within or near to the township of Tumut.

The agreement outlined is that the parties had identified the Site (Tumut Aerodrome) as an appropriate location for the Project.

In the agreement SVC had agreed to:

- make the Site available to the NSW RFS and FCNSW
- permit NSW RFS and FCNSW to occupy the Site upon completion of the Project, for the Initial Term, with the option of extension for the Option Terms, which is a total of 20 years.

The agreement identifies that NSW RFS and FCNSW have agreed to jointly carry out and deliver the Project on the Site as per the terms set out in the agreement.

In very general terms due to the confidentiality clause in the agreement, the principles agreed to between the parties for the development and occupancy of the new facility are as follows:

- How the Design of the new facility is to be managed
- The establishment of a Project Control Group to oversee the design and delivery of the project
- The appointment of a Project Manager
- Appointment of Contractors to carry out the construction phase of the project
- A Timetable (Program) for implementation
- How the facility vests with Council when complete
- Occupation of the facility and the formulation of an Occupation management committee
- How the payment of outgoing and general costs is to be apportioned
- How Cleaning maintenance and repair costs is to be apportioned
- Signage
- General Commercial terms around tenancies in the facility
- The preparation of a Project Agreement and Occupancy Agreement
- How Relationships are managed
- Unfettered discretion

- Confidentiality
- Annexures - Master Plan and Schedule – Facility Breakdown – Location and Concept Masterplan

Questions from the Committee -

Why does the hangar cost so much and what is going in the hangar? Committee members mentioned the True North Hangar as a comparison. There must be more than just a helicopter. Is there a drawing or plan for the hangar.

Response: Dean Anderson – In 2021 there was a proposal to put a helicopter in Tumut – but it went to Cooma instead for various reasons and they built a hangar in Cooma.

Committee members corrected Dean and stated there is no Hangar in Cooma – the project never got off the ground.

Dean said he would leave that up to the RFS to respond to and stated that the design of the Cooma Hangar is the base design for the hangar proposed at Tumut Aerodrome.

Questions from the Committee -

Question to Dean - Is it you're understanding that the RFS were going to be the occupier of this Hangar at Tumut Aerodrome all year round?

Response: Dean Anderson stated that the RFS are the owner and manager of the site and would use it when they needed to.

Committee members stated that this is now different to what is being stated by the RFS who are saying it's a Council building and facility?

Questions from the Committee -

Is there going to be a legal agreement between RFS and Council on how the Hangar facility is to be used?

Response: Dean Anderson stated that this is outlined in the Draft Heads of Agreement that came to Council. RFS will be the occupier of the hangar as per the draft heads of agreement.

The committee members stated they hadn't seen the Draft Heads of Agreement that Dean keeps referring to.

Dean stated you can go through the Council minutes and read the Draft Heads of Agreement.

Note: The Report – Item 10.2 from the 21 March 2024 Council Meeting – Report from the Interim General Manager – 'Proposed Fire Control Centre – Heads of Agreement' can be accessed on Council's website along with the entire Heads of Agreement which is under separate cover to the main Council Report.

Questions from the Committee -

The Fire Control Centre was approved by Council – but the Hangar wasn't?

Response: Dean Anderson and Carli Porteous stated there were numerous reports to Council where it was clear the hangar formed part of the Heads of Agreement. On 21 March 2024 the Heads of Agreement Report comes to Council and in Schedule 1 – it outlines that the Facility includes a Hangar.

(This is confirmed - on page 10 – Schedule 1 of the agreement – one of the facilities listed is a "Hangar" approximately 500m2).

Questions from the Committee -

Cr John Larter stated he is of a mind to take the whole Fire Control Centre back to Council to have it removed from the Council land at Tumut Aerodrome because it is taking up valuable commercial land that Council could lease and use the revenue to try and pay for the operation of the aerodrome which currently operates at a huge loss to Council.

Response: Dean Anderson stated he would hate to see that.

Questions from the Committee -

Thought the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner was coming to address the committee on this issue.

Response: The Director stated that his recollection was that it would be just the RFS coming to address the Committee – the Director said he would check his notes.

Questions from the Committee -

Can you please provide the Committee members with copies of the plans for the Hangar?

Response: Dean Anderson stated that he had copies of the plans – The Director of Infrastructure & Works stated he would get copies of the plans for the Committee.

Questions from the Committee -

Who pays for the maintenance of the Hangar?

Response: Carli Porteous stated that Industry contributors or members of the Softwood Working Group had the grant money in a bank account awaiting the building of the Hangar. Carli Porteous stated she had a meeting with Jessica Quilty the Acting General Manager a few months ago and that the Council would provide to the industry members of Softwoods Working Group an invoice for maintenance on the facility when built and they would pay for the maintenance.

There is a formal letter to Council confirming this arrangement that industry members of Softwoods Working Group would pay for maintenance on the Hangar facility until the RFS took possession of the Hangar?

Questions from the Committee -

What if the RFS don't want the Hangar. Question from the Mayor - Is it correct that Council can lease the hangar facility?

Response: Dean Anderson stated that this matter is something that the Council has to raise with the RFS. Carli Porteous stated that as long as the hangar would be available during the peak fire season and when there is a fire emergency for the purpose of protecting the community against fire.

Questions from the Committee -

Question from Cr Grant Hardwick – does the Hangar have to be used by the RFS during the fire season or an emergency? Or can another entity (business) use the hangar for the same purpose? What if True North decided to subcontract to someone else who needed a bigger hangar facility than they have?

Response: Dean Anderson stated in discussions with them (RFS) they are not opposed to an arrangement like that – but from the onset the Hangar has been a facility for the RFS to use.

Statement from Cr Hardwick – that may have been the case, but it looks like now they (RFS) are stepping back?

Dean Anderson stated – no because that's how the legislation is set up – that's how it works.

Cr John Larter stated that there is an email from the RFS saying they have nothing to do with this now and the Mayor has stated to Cr Larter the same thing. Cr Larter stated no one now knows what's going on – it's a "balls up".

Cr Larter mentioned the Karen Kniep (Chair Plantations Fire Reference Group) three page letter was full of inaccuracies. She works for DPI – isn't that a conflict of interest – how can the Chair of the Chair Plantations Fire Reference Group write a letter to the Minister recommending a project like this proceed – isn't that a conflict of interest?

Dean Anderson stated – no because how does that work in practice if a public servant cannot write a recommendation to a Minister? that's their job!. Someone has to review and make a call. Dean stated how could a Hangar to house fire fighting assets be of no use!

Cr Larter went on to describe that the hangar is useless - QANTAS only uses its hangars for maintenance. Helicopters fighting fires do not need to be in a hangar – they fly in fly out and are in constant operation all the time – they don't sit in hangars – they park on the grass!

The Committee (Bridget Ryan) went into detail about how local firefighting (Aerial) services work and how True North business model works.

The concept that aerial firefighting assets will just sit in a hangar waiting to be used is not correct – that's not what happens at the moment there are no "Idle Assets".

Cr Larter – Quoted again from the letter from Karen Kniep about a specialist Hangar at Tumut Aerodrome which would have the ability to house specialist firefighting aircraft either temporarily or permanently located within the region and that this would complement the facility and capabilities stationed at Cooma. Cr Larter stated this is all lies because the Cooma facility has not been built.

Committee – General discussion about RFS Assets

The Committee went into general discussion about how the RFS can put Assets anywhere in the state to fight fires and that this is all controlled out of Sydney. Bridget Ryan (True North) went into detail about how the allocation of aerial firefighting assets works when there is a fire.

General comments from Dean Anderson – when the group met – the general consensus was the best way to secure a larger helicopter to come to Tumut was to build this hangar – its about being pre-emptive and strategic.

Comments from the committee – you can park any helicopter on the grass.

Cr John Larter stated Council initially knocked backed this proposal because the real benefit to being able to fight fires was to extend the runway.

Carlo Porteous stated – we are not going to have this conversation again – it's been had and Council has resolved to proceed with this proposal. A committee member pointed out the resolution of Council from October 2024 and also previous resolutions of Council on the options to upgrade the Aerodrome.

Cr John Larter said Council only supported the proposal on the basis that the RFS would guarantee the proposal would not impact local business – Cr Larter stated that no such guarantee has been received from the RFS.

The Mayor asked Bridget Ryan - is this proposal (The Hangar) have the potential to impact True North Business?

Bridget said this is a conversation she would like Jim, her partner to be a party to. Bridget stated that they cannot stop anyone from coming and setting up a similar business to their business. Bridget went onto to describe in detail how their business works in terms of providing firefighting services in the area.

Bridget stated that putting \$3.85 million into a Hangar is not the best use of the money – it should be put into a contract for aerial firefighting services.

Dean Anderson stated that the grant money could only be used for infrastructure. If the project doesn't go ahead the money stays with the Government.

Bridget stated there will be a release on new "heavy" firefighting contracts next year. (Heavy meaning bigger aircraft – helicopters – like black hawks).

The Mayor asked members of the Committee if they thought the money for the Hangar was a waste – was it required? All Committee members responded no – they thought the hangar is not required.

Committee member - Glenyce Francis went onto discuss the upgrade of the Aerodrome and the impact it is having on property owners and what a wonderful job Council is doing – but the upgrade is "squishing" everyone - Council should just buy all the properties around the aerodrome.

Questions from the Committee -

Is there going to be a water line out to the aerodrome?

Response: The Director of Infrastructure & Works responded that yes – it was part of the grant funding Council has received.

Committee – General discussion about how Hangars at Aerodromes are used -

The Committee raised the issue that aircraft used during firefighting emergencies are not put in hangars. They sit on the grass because from an operational point of view that's more efficient. Bridget Ryan stated that when True North fight fires across the state they would never use a Hangar because firstly they wouldn't pay for the storage of their helicopters as that is an oncost they cannot afford and secondly, it's not practical when fighting fires to be pulling helicopters in and out of Hangars.

Question from Cr Hugh Packard - It would appear that RFS have come up with the idea of the Hangar – why wouldn't they consider putting the \$4.0 million towards the Fire Control Centre?

The Director of Infrastructure & Works stated that the money they (RFS) has for the Fire Control Centre has been parked by Treasury in the future years budget. This grant money for the Hangar from the Plantation Fire Protection Fund and the funding NSW Treasury has parked for the Fire Control Centre are two different funding streams – separate grant funding money - one is for the RFS Fire Control Centre (NSW Treasury) and one is for the Hangar (Plantation Fire Protection Fund)

The Mayor stated she would like to go away and discuss this matter with Softwoods Working Group and RFS and stated that she is happy with us just listening today.

The Director of Infrastructure & Works stated that he would do his best to record the minutes of what has been stated here today and that both these minutes and the minutes from the Ordinary Tumut Aerodrome meeting held last week would go to the June Council meeting – both sets of minutes will go up together.

The Mayor thanked Dean Anderson and Carli Porteous for attending the meeting

Committee – General discussion

Members of the Committee went into what happened in the 2019 fires and how the RFS has control of where firefighting assets go during fires and that the Sydney Office has the final say!

The committee commented that it was good that four (4) Councillors were in attendance

Dean Anderson proposed a question to the Committee which was – "When you were presented with the Master Plan for the Aerodrome upgrade – what did you think was going in the hangar shown on the drawings? – Its said hangar and housed RFS assets.

The Committee members stated that when they read the document years ago and it just wasn't clear that this hangar was going to be a \$3.8million RFS facility.

Dean Anderson stated – that because there hadn't been any concerns raised about the hangar when the Master Plan was prepared and adopted a few years ago that there wasn't an issue and that when they (The Softwoods Working Group) were going through putting the proposal together for the grant funding – the adopted Master Plan document was used as validation that Council supported a Hangar.

The hangar had appeared in so many plans and documents that they (Softwoods Working Group) had found a solution – they were solving a problem – not creating one.

Tumut Aerodrome Master Plan

In response to questions raised by the Committee about not knowing that this proposed hangar facility was planned at the Aerodrome - it was stated by Dean Anderson – Softwoods Working Group Chair that the hangar is also shown on the Master Plan for the Aerodrome adopted by Council on 20 April 2023:

(It is confirmed in these minutes that the Master Plan was reported to the previous Council at its meeting held 20 April 2023 - Item 10.3.)

10.3. TUMUT AERODROME DRAFT MASTER PLAN - COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**M53/23 RESOLVED:****THAT COUNCIL:**

1. Adopt the amended Tumut Aerodrome Master Plan noting the following changes:
 - a) Modify section 9 (p24) of the Master Plan to move the runway extension from 'Ultimate Development Stage' (5-20 years) to 'Initial Development Stage' (1-5 years) and add weather station to 'Initial Development Stage'.
 - b) Modify section 9.1 (p25) to include the runway extension 300m to the north & weather station location (if installed) under 'Initial Development Stage'.
 - c) Modify section 9.4 (p28) to remove the runway extension from the 'Ultimate Development Stage'.
 - d) Inclusion of possible location for a weather station if installed (shown on page 25).
2. Write to all respondents thanking them for their submission and advising them of Council's decision.

Cr Julia Ham/Cr John Larter

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

On page 25 of the adopted Master Plan – Item 9.1 it clearly shows land designated for a RFS / Forestry landside facility – which includes buildings labelled Hangar – Main Building- Store – Airbase – Carpark. Refer to Extract below:

Image 1:

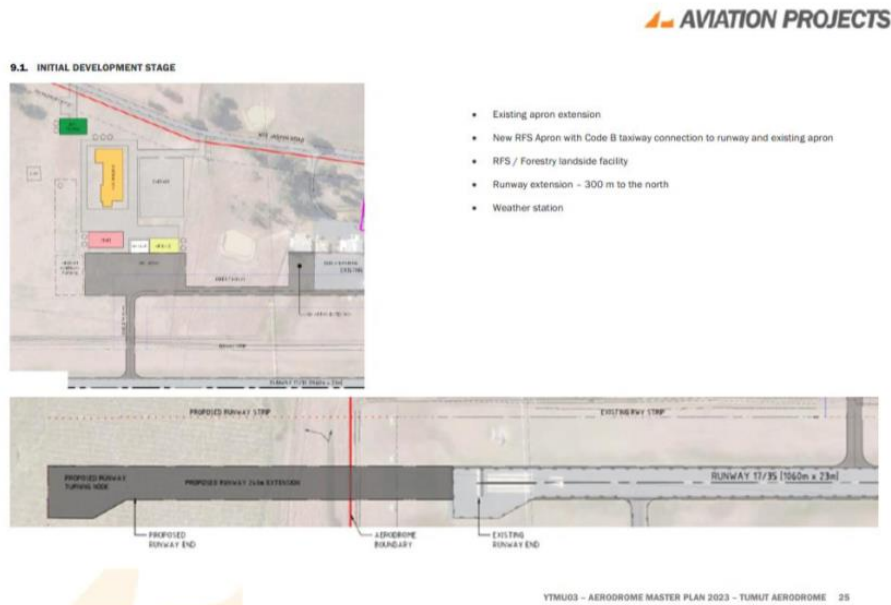
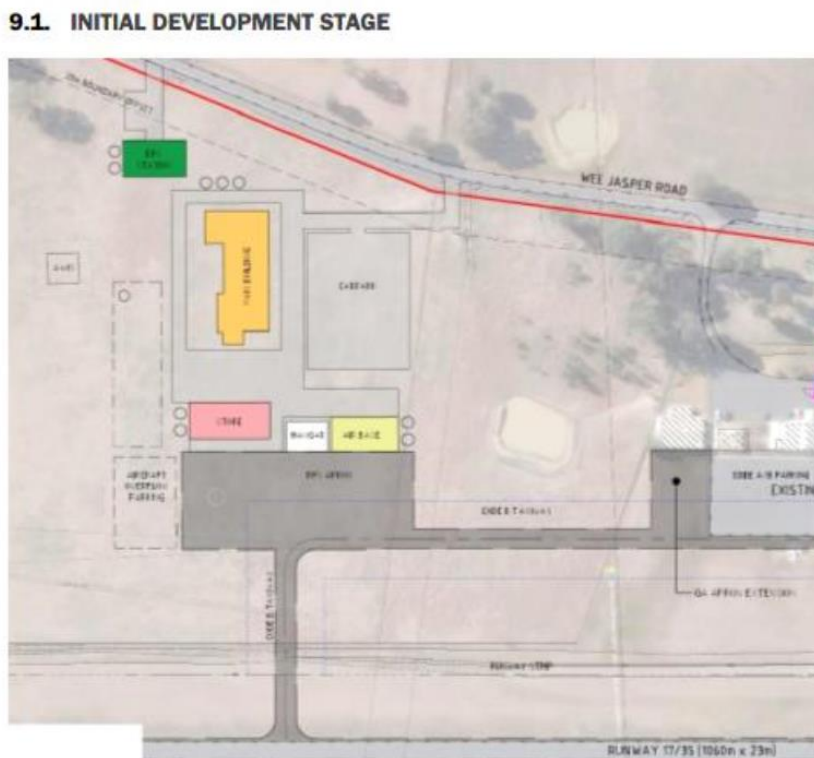


Image 2:



General Discussion from the Committee

Committee members discussed about going ahead and build the Hangar – but it will be an empty Hangar! Can Council lease the Hangar?

Committee members stated that it was a Hangar facility that cannot be rented or leased to anyone else – therefore no revenue to Council – but it's a Council asset – so why cannot it bring revenue to Council?

Committee members raised the issue that the Aerodrome doesn't make enough money to cover its operating costs as it is and that this Hangar is taking up valuable commercial space at the aerodrome that Council could otherwise be leasing to other tenants commercially.

Committee members asked again who is paying for this?

Committee members asked Dean Anderson if they could go back and look at other infrastructure options?

Dean Anderson stated no.

Cr John Larter stated no one wants to go to Cooma – they all want to come to Tumut – the pilots all want to come to Tumut and that's where they want to house the 412? Dean Anderson agreed. Cr Larter stated that the numbers in the Karen Kniep letter are wrong.

Committee members stated it was a shame the RFS were not here at the meeting.

There was consensus from the Committee including Dean Anderson and the Mayor that this issue should really go higher up the management chain at RFS and that the Deputy Commissioner of the RFS – Kyle Stewart should be contacted and should be brought into the picture to explain what exactly is the RFS position on the matter.

Cr Larter stated that there is confusion that Council was initially told the Hangar was for the RFS – now Council is being told from the RFS that it's not an RFS Facility – it's a Council Asset, however at this meeting today the Softwoods Working Group are saying it is an RFS Facility and Councils' Master Plan and Reports to Council on the Heads of Agreement support that position? There is general confusion about who controls the Hangar facility. Cr Larter quoted the email from Jon Gregory – RFS about how the facility is not an RFDS facility and that it is not for Blackhawk helicopters.

The Mayor said she appreciated everyone being respectful at the meeting.

Committee – General discussion 2019 Fires

Members of the committee went into discussion of what happened in the 2019 fires and “scuttlebutt” about no one being interested in the fires in 2019 because they were initially in a hard wood forest!

Dean Anderson went into detail about how that's not true and the role that the Forestry stakeholders played in trying to control the initial fires and how people could smell smoke – just not fresh smoke!

Dean went into detail about how Fire Fighting assets were deployed and the competing priorities across the State which had multiple fire fronts to control including the coast and how no help would come over the escarpment to help what was happening.

Dean Anderson – stated “It's total BS that forestry stakeholders did nothing at the start of the 2019 fires”

Bridget Ryan raised the issue that True North had two helicopters stationed at Kempsey – but the RFS were reluctant to release those assets because of the fire problems in Kempsey.

Dean Anderson say it comes from the simple principle of “Life over Property” not “Property over Life” that determines the allocation of how firefighting assets are distributed by the RFS in an emergency.

Committee members agreed and stated that it's RFS who has control of where firefighting assets go during fires and that the Sydney Office has the final say!

Dean Anderson stated that Helicopters do their best work in the initial outbreak that's why having a helicopter ready to go at Tumut is very important.

Bridget Ryan stated that they (True North) should be supported as their business in Tumut has been primarily established to help firefighting in the local area.

Once again the Mayor thanked everyone for attending.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL:

1. **The RFS Deputy Commissioner confirm why a new hangar facility at Tumut Aerodrome is required; and**
2. **The RFS Deputy Commissioner confirm the status of the proposed Fire Control Centre at Tumut Aerodrome and the existing Heads of Agreement that Council and the RFS have signed but Forestry Corp NSW have not signed.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. GENERAL BUSINESS:

Nil

10. NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded at 5.25pm.

The next meeting of the Committee be held on the 12 August 2025 commencing at 4pm in the Riverina Room / via video link.

**Attachment 2 - RFS - Forestry - Joint Development - Fire Control Centre - Tumut Aerodrome -
SVC Signed Heads of Agreement 2 May 2024**



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



Joint Development – Snowy Valleys Fire Control Centre & Forestry Office at Tumut Aerodrome

Heads of Agreement

Snowy Valleys Council
SVC

NSW Rural Fire Service
NSWRFS

Forestry Corporation of NSW
FCNSW

25 March 2024

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Heads of Agreement

Parties Snowy Valley Council ABN 53 558 891 887 of 76 Capper Street, Tumut NSW 2720 (**SVC**)

NSW Rural Fire Service ABN 250 031 292 21 of No 4 Murray Rose Avenue, Sydney
Olympic Park NSW 2141 (**NSW RFS**)

Forestry Corporation of NSW ABN 43 141 857 613 of 121-131 Oratava Avenue, West
Pennant Hills NSW 2125 (**FCNSW**)

Background

- A. NSW RFS requires a new Fire Control Centre within the Snowy Valleys Council local government area, within or near to the township of Tumut.
- B. FCNSW requires a new area administration facility within or near to the township of Tumut.
- C. The parties have identified the Site as an appropriate location for the Project.
- D. SVC has agreed to:
 - a) make the Site available to the NSW RFS and FCNSW
 - b) permit NSW RFS and FCNSW to occupy the Site upon completion of the Project, for the Initial Term, with the option of extension for the Option Terms,on the general terms set out in this Agreement.
- E. The NSW RFS and FCNSW have agreed to jointly carry out and deliver the Project on the Site on the general terms set out in this Agreement
- F. This Agreement sets out the principles agreed between the parties as to the development and occupancy of the Site.

Operative Provisions

1. Definitions and interpretations

1.1 Definitions

In this agreement:

Initial Term means a period of 20 years from the date of practical completion of the Fire Control Centre.

EP&A Act means the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

Facility means the proposed built infrastructure to be constructed on the Site

FCNSW Occupied Area means the area to be funded by Forestry Corporation.

LG Act means the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)

Option term means two options of 10 years each

Master Plan and Schedule means the plan and schedule for the Project attached at Annexure A, as varied from time to time

Occupation Agreement means an agreement to be entered into between SVC and FCNSW in relation to FCNSW's occupation of the FCNSW Occupied Area and use of the Site.

Project means:

- (a) The obtaining of all necessary approvals for the Works; and
- (b) The planning, design, develop, construction and commissioning of the Works.

Project Agreement means an agreement to be entered into between the parties in relation to the carrying out of the Project.

PCG means Project Control Group

Project Costs means the costs of carrying out the Project as agreed between the Parties, including:

- (a) The costs of the Works including costs of design, development, and construction, including all Approvals and certificates and any preliminary site upgrade works

Progress Statement means a monthly statement prepared by NSW RFS which:

- (a) Details the progression of the Works since the last Progress Statement
- (b) Itemises the Project Costs incurred since the last Progress Statement
- (c) Tracks how the expenditure of Project Costs exceeds or differs from the budgets approved by the PCG; and
- (d) Contains such reasonable supporting documentation to allow the Parties to verify the Project Costs

RF Act means the Rural Fires Act 1997 (NSW)

RFS Occupied Area means the area to be funded by the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Service Level Agreement means the rural fire district service agreement entered into between SVC and NSW RFS dated [insert date], pursuant to s.12A of the RF Act.

Site means that part of Lot 2 DP 1075294 Wee Jasper Road, Tumut NSW 2720 located at Tumut Aerodrome, which has an area of approximately 3.5 hectares and is identified in Annexure A - Location and Concept Master Plan.

Works means all works required to be undertaken or carried out on the Site to construct the Facility, and related improvements including any preliminary Site infrastructure upgrade works.

1.2 Interpretation

- (a) A reference to a party includes that party's executors, administrators, successors and permitted assigns.
- (b) A reference to a document (including this agreement) is to that document as varied, novated, ratified or replaced from time to time.
- (c) A word importing the singular includes the plural (and vice versa), and a word indicating a gender includes every other gender.
- (d) A reference to a party, clause, schedule, exhibit, attachment or annexure is a reference to a party, clause, schedule, exhibit, attachment or annexure to or of this

agreement, and a reference to this agreement includes all schedules, exhibits, attachments and annexures to it.

2. The Project

2.1 Project Agreement

- (a) The Parties will enter into a Project Agreement to govern the terms of the Project, in accordance with this Part 2.
- (b) Project Agreement shall set out the terms and conditions governing the Project.

2.2 The Project

- (a) NSW RFS, FCNSW and SVC will jointly carry out the Project.
- (b) In carrying out the Project, NSW RFS, FCNSW and SVC will:
 - (i) Engage a project manager to:
 - A. prepare an initial budget for the Works for approval by RFS, FCNSW and SVC;
 - B. design, plan, commence, construct and complete the Works in accordance with all approvals, certificates and other legal requirements, including lodging all applications and development applications on instruction from NSW RFS, FCNSW and SVC, as set out further in clause 2.3 below;
 - C. prepare the commercial conditions of contract and manage the procurement of contractors for the construction of the Facility;
 - D. assume the Principal Contractor role for the Works, within the meaning of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW), for the Project;
 - E. take out all necessary insurances, including public liability insurance and workers compensation;
 - F. rectify any defects in the Works; and
 - G. report to NSW RFS, FCNSW and SVC in the manner and frequency as required by them.
 - (ii) Pay the Project Costs in proportions set out in the Project Agreement
 - (iii) Report to the PCG on progress of the Project and seek all necessary approvals from the PCG, as set out in clause 2.5.

2.3 Design

- (a) The project manager engaged under clause 2.2 will be responsible for preparing the functional design brief and all design plans, specifications and schedule of finishes required to obtain development consent, the construction certificate and any other approval required to enable the construction of the Facility to the satisfaction of the NSW RFS and FCNSW.

- (b) NSW RFS and FCNSW will submit the design prepared under this clause 2.3 to the Project Control Group, in accordance with clause 2.4.
- (c) The Design of the facility is to be broadly based on the standard NSW RFS Large Fire Control Centre and FCNSW design requirements and must meet the needs of NSW RFS and FCNSW.

2.4 Project Control Group

- (a) The parties will appoint representatives to establish a Project Control Group (PCG) which will meet monthly (or such other times as agreed) until the completion of the works. The PCG will ensure the Facility and the Works are fit for purpose and in accordance with all approvals, design documents, development approvals and laws.
- (b) The parties will have one vote each in relation to any proposed decision or resolution. All Major Decisions in relation to the Project may only be made by unanimous agreement of the PCG.
- (c) For the purpose of this clause, Major Decisions of the PCG are:
 - (i) Approval of design documentation
 - (ii) Approval of development application and any modifications
- (d) At least five (5) business days prior to each PCG meeting, the Project Manager will provide a report to the parties containing information relevant to the progress of the Project, and the progress towards achieving the Milestones and information relevant to Major Decisions, including the progress of any application for or in relation to the works.

2.5 Appointment of contractors

- (a) The Project Manager will engage and appoint all consultants and contractors for the Project in the manner required by the relevant procurement policies and regulations of the NSW Government, pursuant to clause 2.2(a) above.
- (b) The NSW RFS, FCNSW and SVC may elect to appoint representatives to undertake the relevant evaluation of any tender(s) submitted in relation to the Project as considered appropriate.

2.6 Timetable

The parties will use best endeavours to carry out and complete the project in a timely and efficient manner so as to achieve the following milestones and timetable:

Task / Milestone / Activity	Indicative Date
Project Initiation	December 2023
Complete Approvals and Tender for Principal Design Consultant (Completed by NSW RFS)	August 2023
Engagement of Principal Design Consultant (Completed by NSW RFS)	October 2023
Engagement of other specialist consultants, as required	June 2024
Coordinate Design Process including Client Work Shops	June – November 2024

Submission of Development Application to SVC	December 2024
Completion Design, specification & contract documents, formation of Selective Tender Panel and Approval to Call Tenders for Construction.	December 2024 - June 2025
Tender Period (assume 7 weeks)	June – July 2025
Complete Tender Assessment process; Tender Recommendation Report	July - August 2025
Award Contract	August 2025
Construction Period - Contract Administration Phase	August 2025 - August 2026
Construction Period - Contingency	August 2026 - September 2026
Construction Completion and Operational Maintenance Period and finalise ICT fit-out, test and commissioning.	September 2026 – October 2026
Occupation by the parties	October 2026

2.7 Vesting of Facility in Council

- (a) Upon completion of the Works, ownership of the Facility shall vest in SVC.
- (b) NSW RFS acknowledges that it has no right title or interest in the Facility pursuant to s.119(2) of the RFA.
- (c) FCNSW disclaims any right title and interest in the Facility as a result of its contribution of funds towards the Works.

3. Occupation

3.1 Grant of occupation

- (a) SVC will grant to FCNSW a right to occupy the FCNSW Occupied Area for the Term following completion of the Works. SVC will enter into an occupation agreement with FCNSW on a commercial lease basis.

The formula below outlines the basis for the calculation of the right to occupy the FCNSW area>

AR = Annual Rent

LV = Land Value

OA = % of land area occupied FCNSW of the entire FCC and FCNSW land area.

Worked example.

$\$300,000 \text{ (LV)} \times 40\% \text{ (OA)} \times 6\% \text{ (CL)} = \$7,200 \text{ pa (AR)}$

The above annual rent would be subject to increases in CPI.

SVC will grant to NSW RFS a right to occupy the NSW RFS Occupied Area for the Term following completion of the Works. This occupation will be governed by the SLA.

- (b) NSW RFS and FCNSW shall have shared access to all common areas, being shared meeting rooms, informal gathering spaces, reception, Operations Centre, ICT/Fire room and associated facilities, training facilities, communications

infrastructure, kitchen, driveways, carpark and other staff amenities and facilities on site as identified in Attachment A.

3.2 Occupation management committee

- (a) On the commencement of the parties' occupation of the facility, the parties will appoint two representatives from each entity to establish an Occupation Management Committee (OMC) which will meet quarterly (or such other times as agreed) until the end of the Term (and any Option Term).
- (b) The OMC will oversee the general agreement between the parties and:
 - (i) resolve any issues that may arise;
 - (ii) develop and monitor the annual works plan to maintain the facility over the life of this agreement.

3.3 Payment of outgoing and general costs

- (a) NSW RFS and FCNSW will pay all costs in relation to the Facility including operating expenses and capital expenses (in accordance with the annual works plan) in proportion to the size of their respective Facility entitlement areas.

3.4 Insurances

- (a) The Site will be included as an asset in SVCs property insurance policy for the duration of the NSW RFS and FCNSW occupation. The NSW RFS and FCNSW will reimburse the SVC on an annual basis the additional insurance premium paid by SVC for the inclusion of the Site into its insurance policy.
- (b) NSW RFS and FCNSW will reimbursement SVC under cl 3.5(a) in proportion to the size of their respective entitlement areas.

3.5 Cleaning, maintenance and repair

- (a) During the term, FCNSW will be responsible for the keeping the FCNSW Occupied Area tidy and in good repair and condition except for fair wear and tear.
- (b) During the term, NSW RFS will be responsible for the keeping the NSW RFS Occupied Area tidy and in good repair and condition except for fair wear and tear.
- (c) NSW RFS and FCNSW will be responsible for remediating or replacing damaged items in NSW RFS NSW RFS Occupied Area and the FCNSW Occupied Area respectively.
- (d) In the event of any damage to any common areas including goods or chattels in common areas, the parties agree to contribute to the repair or replacement in proportion to the size of their respective entitlement areas. If the damage was caused by one party, that party shall pay the full cost of repair or replacement.

3.6 Signage

- (a) The parties may bring on to the facility and install any lawful signage and property.

4. Negotiations, documentation and further assurances

4.1 General commercial terms only

- (a) This agreement briefly records general commercial terms for the

(i) carrying out and delivery of the Project on the Site by FCNSW and NSWRFSS

(ii) occupation of the Facility/Site by NSW RFS and FCNSW upon completion of the Works; and

does not set out the full terms of the Project Agreement, the Occupancy Agreement and the SLA.

4.2 Further terms

(a) The Project Agreement and Occupancy Agreement shall contain those reasonable representations, warranties, undertakings, procedural provision and other terms that the parties agree.

4.3 Undertaking to negotiate

(a) The parties must each use their best endeavours to negotiate in good faith with each other and to have the:

(i) Project Agreement entered into by August 2024, unless the parties agree in writing to extend that date, and

(ii) The Occupancy Agreement entered into by October 2026, unless FCNSW and SVC agree to extend that date.

4.4 Preparation of the Project Agreement and Occupancy Agreement

(a) The Project Agreement will be prepared by RFS, FCNSW and SVC

(b) The Occupancy Agreement will be prepared by SVC, RFS and FCNSW

5. Binding obligations

The only legally binding terms in this agreement are:

(a) Clauses 4.3 (undertaking to negotiate in good faith) and 8 (confidentiality)

6. Relationship

(a) Parties are independent

(b) No party has authority to take action on behalf of another party

(c) Third parties have no power against a party due to action of another party

7. Unfettered discretion

Nothing in this agreement is taken to bind or influence SVC when performing its:

(a) Approval process in relation to the provision of landowner consent to the development application for the Works; and

(b) Approval process as the consent authority for the development application for the Works.

8. Confidentiality**8.1 Confidentiality**

- (a) Subject to clause 8.2, each party must keep confidential the terms of this agreement, all information in connection with this agreement and the transactions contemplated by it, however obtained.

8.2 Exceptions

- (a) A party may make any disclosure in relation to this agreement:
- (i) to a professional adviser or auditor if that person is obliged to keep that information confidential;
 - (ii) to comply with the law, or a requirement of a regulatory body;
 - (iii) to any of its employees to whom it is necessary to disclose the information;
 - (iv) to obtain the consent of a third party to a term of, or to an act under this agreement;
 - (v) to enforce its rights or to defend a claim or action under this agreement;
 - (vi) if the information has come into the public domain through no fault of the party making the disclosure

9. General**9.1 Governing law**

- (a) This agreement is governed by and must be construed according to the law applying in New South Wales.

9.2 Costs

- (a) Each party must pay its own costs and expenses in connection with negotiating, preparing and executing this agreement, Development and Occupancy Agreement and all other transactions contemplated by this agreement, including the costs and expenses of all consultants, advisers and others it engages to assist it in connection with those documents and transactions. No representation or reliance

10. Schedule 1 – Facility**11. Annexure A – Master Plan and Schedule**

Signed as an agreement dated this day of2024

Signed on behalf of,
Snowy Valleys Council in the presence of:


Signature


Signature of witness


Full name of witness

Joshua Torrens
Signed on behalf of,
Director Logistics and Equipment
NSW Rural Fire Service in the presence of:


Signature


Signature of witness

Shannyn Garrett
Fleet Production Manager
Full name of witness

Signed on behalf of,
Forestry Corporation of NSW in the presence
of:

Signature

Signature of witness

Full name of witness

Schedule 1 - Facility

[the below to be developed]

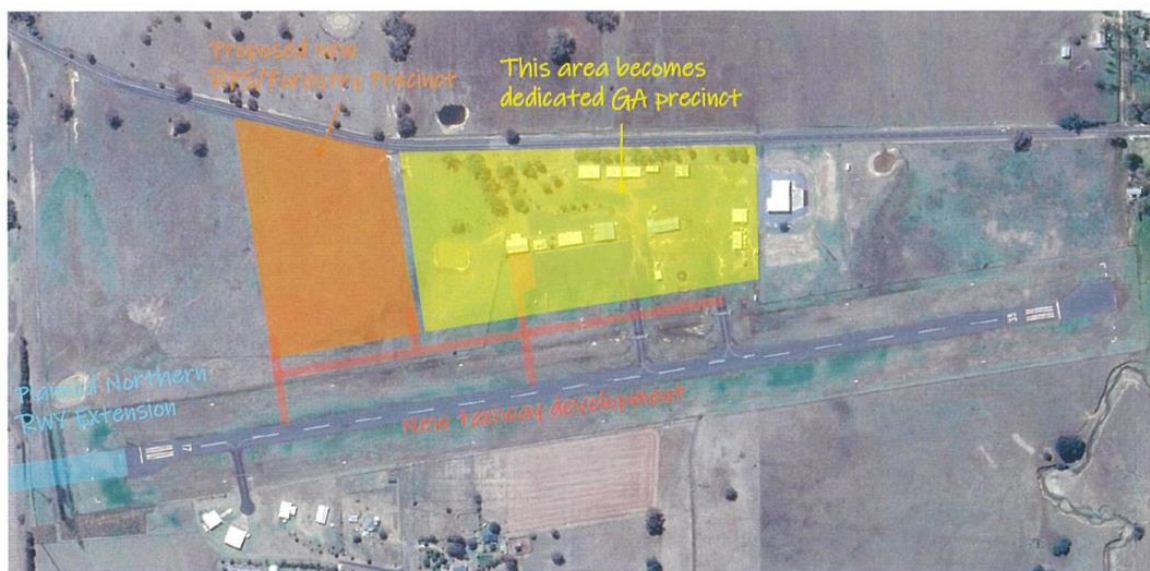
The Facility is to consist of:

1. Five buildings including Fire Control Centre with brigade station, storage shed, hangar and retardant base. The building sizes will be determined in the Concept Design and Approval process however as a guide based on NSWRFs standards:-
 - a. Main building approximately 1450m²
 - b. Stores building approximately 750m²
 - c. Brigade station approximately 300m²
 - d. Airbase building approximately 300m²
 - e. Hangar building approximately 500m²
 - f. Designated car parking for 90 vehicles and overflow undefined parking for 50 vehicles.
 - g. There is NO Hot Fire Training Ground.
 - h. Re-fuelling of Aircraft will be done (as per the current arrangement) at the existing Airport facility and not within this facility site.
2. Car parking, water tanks, water and sewage treatment infrastructure and an apron handstand area.

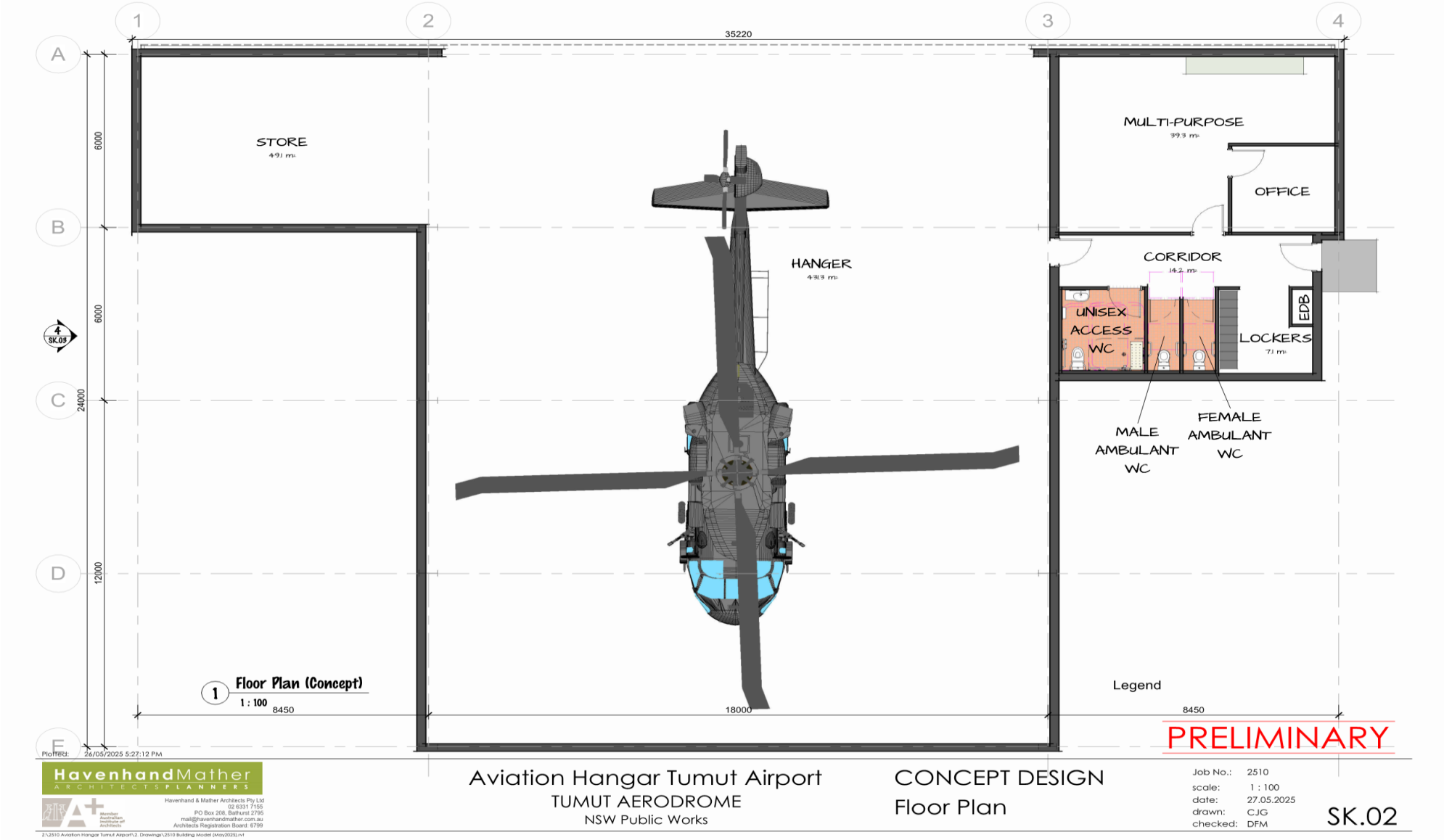
The parties acknowledge that they are currently no services available to the site. There is no potable water or reticulated sewerage to the site.

The facility will be upgraded for provision of these services, including:

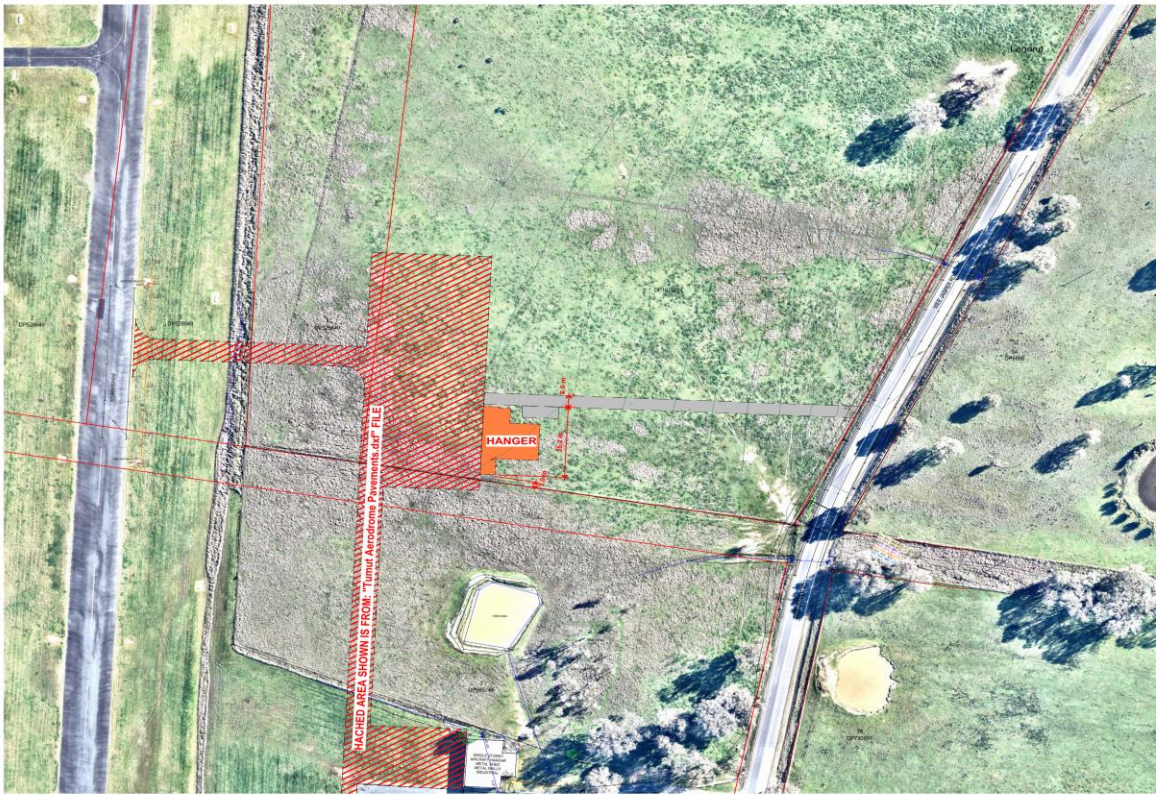
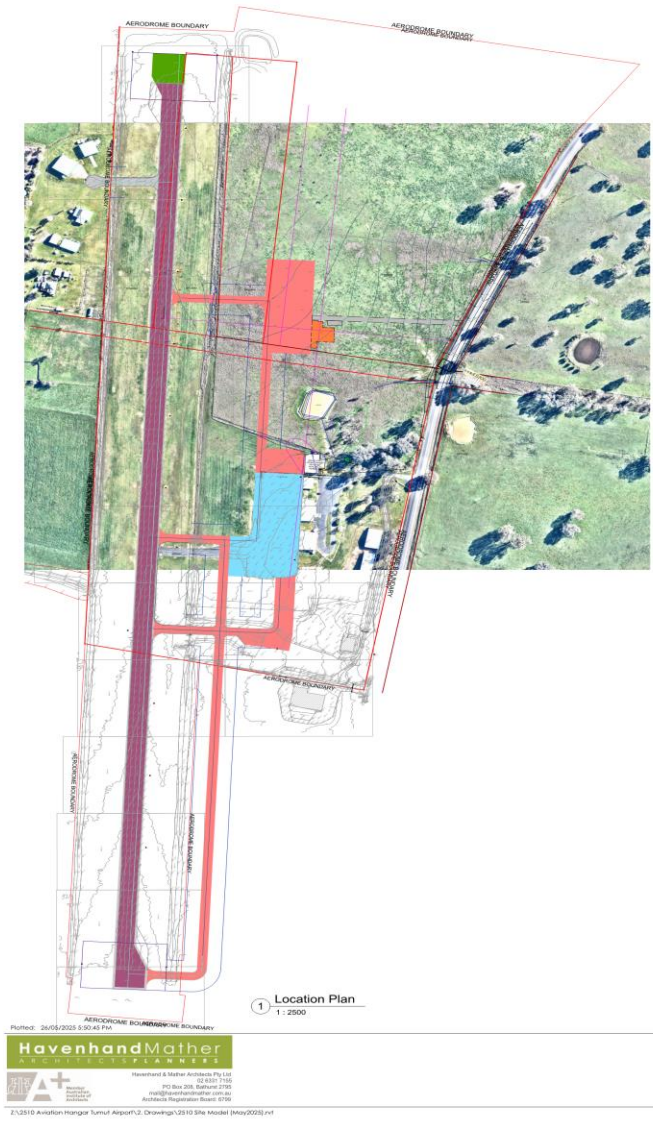
1. self-sufficient and incorporate onsite potable water and sewerage treatment sufficient to service the facility, scalable for emergency purposes.
2. [List infrastructure upgrades]

Annexure A – Location and Concept Master Plan

Attachment 3 - Helicopter Hangar - Floor Plan



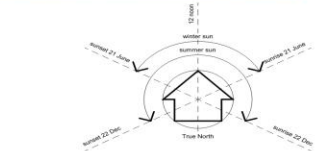
Attachment 4 - Helicopter Hangar - Site Diagram



Aviation Hangar Tumut Airport

NSW PUBLIC WORKS
Snowy Valleys Council

CONCEPT DESIGN
SITE DIAGRAM



PRELIMINARY

JOB No.: 2510
SCALE: As indicated @A1
DATE: 27.05.2025
DRAWN: C/JG
CHECKED: DFM

SD.01

Attachment 5 - Enquiry and Response - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - Mayor & Deputy Commissioner Strategic Cap NSW RFS - Redacted

Sent: Thu, 12 Jun 2025 09:01:10 +1000
Subject: 20250612 - Enquiry and Response - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - Mayor & Deputy Commissioner Strategic Capability NSW Rural Fire Service

From: Kyle Stewart [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 11 June 2025 3:52 PM
To: Julia Ham <mayor@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Peter McKechnie [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Duncan Mitchell [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Jon Gregory [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Kam Baker [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Nicholas Medianik [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: RE: 20250605 - Questions & Answers - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - RFS NSW to Mayor Ham

Julia

Peter is presently in the US and may not be able to respond to you by your deadline. Can I please confirm for you that Peter's response can be included in the council's business papers.

Kyle.

From: Julia Ham <mayor@svc.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 11 June 2025 3:38 PM
To: Peter McKechnie <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Duncan Mitchell <[REDACTED]@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Kyle Stewart <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Jon Gregory <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Kam Baker <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Nicholas Medianik <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Re: 20250605 - Questions & Answers - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - RFS NSW to Mayor Ham

Thanks Peter,

The business papers are being completed today. It would be excellent if we could add your response .

If possible

Julia

Julia Ham

Mayor - Snowy Valleys Council



P:
M: 0411 585 479
W: www.svc.nsw.gov.au

Leading, engaging and supporting strong and vibrant communities



Snowy Valleys Council proudly acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land and water and pay respects to their Elders past and present.

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From: Peter McKechnie <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, June 5, 2025 8:28:25 AM
To: Julia Ham <mayor@svc.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Duncan Mitchell <[REDACTED]@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Kyle Stewart <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Jon Gregory <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Kam Baker <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>; Nicholas Medianik <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: 20250605 - Questions & Answers - Tumut Aerodrome Hangar - RFS NSW to Mayor Ham

Hi Julia, thank you for your time today, it was a great opportunity to progress our engagement and discuss these matters. Below in red are details relating to your queries, we look forward to working through our ongoing partnership to deliver the new Fire Control Centre and are happy to assist with matters relating to the hangar put forward by the Plantations Fire Reference Group, noting it is intended this will in the future form part of the FCC precinct

Regards

Peter
Peter McKechnie AFSM
Deputy Commissioner Strategic Capability

NSW Rural Fire Service

From: Julia Ham <mayor@svc.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 2 June 2025 2:32 PM
To: Peter McKechnie <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Duncan Mitchell <[REDACTED]@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Jessica Quilty <[REDACTED]@svc.nsw.gov.au>; Kyle

Stewart <[REDACTED]@rfs.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Tumut Aerodrome Hangar

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mayor@svc.nsw.gov.au. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Peter,

Kyle suggested I contact you with some of the questions asked of Councillors about the hangar in Tumut. The hangar has been voted for by Councillors however there are still some questions we would like answered particularly by the Tumut Aerodrome committee.

If this could be answered promptly, we will be able to add to the report coming to council with the aerodrome committee minutes.

With thanks

There are questions about the requirement of the hangar. Why do we need a hangar required for maybe only a couple of days a year and during bushfire season it would be in use not hangared? Simply...what is it for?

The hangar provides firstly a secure environment to store our aircraft when they are tasked to the area. Some of our aircraft and associated equipment are subject to International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) set by the US Government. Secondly the hangar will assist in providing a suitable aviation operations base during incidents meaning not only an ability to store aircraft but a management point which can be integrated with the Incident Management Team in the Fire Control Centre (FCC). This would operate similar to the existing airbase facility which we will forego as part of the overall development of the FCC and this hangar.

I understand the question has been asked why not just use a security guard. Ultimately we must be able to ensure a secure environment and also ensure the aircraft are able to be housed in a safe manner and the hangar provides the best possible way to do this.

Could you confirm if Council could, under an agreement, utilise the hangar for commercial and licensing opportunities.

Until we complete the FCC development this would be Council's decision, given we are not locating any permanent resources nor managing it through the normal arrangements which form part of the Service Level Agreement. When the FCC is complete I suggest this would change given the facility will form part of the same site and be managed consistently. This does not mean council would not be able to access but would need to be revisited. I would suggest given the allocation of funds from the program, this would be subject to discussion with the stakeholders of the Plantations Fire Protection Fund, certainly we can provide input as to the times of the year we would most likely seek to access the hangar given likelihood of increased fire risk.

Are you able to tell me what type of aircraft would be stored in the hangar if you know? There is a lot of conjecture about different types of aircrafts. There is a local helicopter

business who, I feel is concerned that having a hangar may threaten part of their business.

From the RFS perspective the aircraft we would task to the area at times of heightened risk or activity would be the Bell 412 helicopters we operate and the Blackhawk aircraft which are currently being operationalised. I would however note that we are cognisant that other agencies may seek to make use of the facility including NPWS and Police who operate a range of aircraft. Importantly it should be noted our aircraft do not replace contracted aircraft, more so they augment the capacity and provide other capabilities.

We need to understand the status of the proposed Fire Control centre. We understand funding has been pushed out by treasury. Can you confirm is this correct ? Is there a new timeline?

This is not correct, 13 fire control centres were prioritised after Black Summer with funding received for the initial 8 of which Snowy Valleys is one. As you are aware a Heads of Agreement (HOA) was reached and we have engaged Public Works to progress detailed site and building plans, we will then progress through the approval processes, tender and ultimately construction. I note Councils desire to ensure the HOA is appropriate given FCNSW will not form part of the project, our A/Director Fleet & Infrastructure will work with your team in this regard and finalise the masterplan.

We understand that Forestry will no longer be tenants therefore the size and footprint of the control centre will be changed . Council would like to understand how this affects adopted the master plan and the arrangement of RFS assets within the area allocated.

The overall site foot print remains consistent, noting will we will work with your team to finalise the masterplan as above and that some building aspects will be different. It should be noted the FCC remains a multi- agency facility in terms of emergency operations and all our facilities are regularly used by a range of stakeholders, including Councils for training, meetings and some miscellaneous events.

Can you confirm if the footprint is to be shrunk as we are interested in using more of the aerodrome area for commercial area. Tumut aerodrome operates at a \$150,000 loss each year. We are looking at ways to increase our revenue

The FCNSW proposed co-location was only a small part of the building internals and some car parking, as above we will finalise the site masterplan with Council, I do note that as part of the development, current facilities which are utilised by our District will be relinquished for Council to reuse as you see fit

Thanks again Peter, Julia

Julia Ham

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Snowy Valleys Council proudly acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land and water and pay respects to their Elders past and present.

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