



Ms Ella Wilkinson
Planning Officer
Modification Assessments, Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY
NSW 2001

Dear Ms Wilkinson

Section 96(2) Modification Application – Sydney International Regatta Centre

'Use of the Sydney International Regatta Centre (SIRC) for Recreation' was originally approved by Minister Diane Beamer on 20 October 2004. The DA (85-4-2004) was modified (MOD 1) and extended over two consecutive 5 year periods i.e. to 20 October 2009 and then 20 October 2014. The consent allows the SIRC to stage a range of sporting/ social/ cultural/ community events and functions and host a broad spectrum of sport and recreation activities.

In relation to this latest application, the Office of Sport is seeking to modify the conditions of consent by requesting that the previous Condition A3 (which states that the consent would cease after 5 years) be removed. There is no desire to modify the other existing conditions or change the latitude of consent in any other way.

Deleting Condition A3 is consistent with the Draft Vision Plan for the Penrith Lakes Parkland developed by the Office of Penrith Lakes. In a letter attached to the application, Director of the Office of Penrith Lakes (Mr Andrew Putt) acknowledges the need for SIRC to provide a range of recreation and commercial uses that are consistent with the Draft Vision Plan. Mr Putt also cites that, consistent with the three largest Regional Parks in Sydney, the proposed Penrith Lakes Parkland must be able to offer a range of revenue generating components.

Maintaining an enduring consent for use of the site is necessary for upholding the NSW Government's commitment to the International Olympic Committee, including obligations to legacy sports (rowing and canoeing) and elite athlete programs.

The SIRC supports a wide range of sporting groups and clubs at all levels and serves community interest and regional demand as a central hub for events, recreational use, cultural and social gatherings for all user groups. Unlike many of the State's major sporting venues, the SIRC strives to maximise the public value offered to the people of NSW by increasing opportunities for public access, casual use of facilities and participation in sport and recreation. The venue also delivers a broad calendar of events that provide social and economic benefits for the LGA and State. The SIRC also contributes to the NSW Government's *2021 Plan*, by:

- Increasing opportunities for participation in sport and recreation; and
- Assisting bids for major events that will attract interstate and overseas tourism

To reduce the reliance on government funding support, remain affordable for users and allow the SIRC to remain on a path for being a financially viable, sustainable and cost efficient public sporting venue, it is critical that the broad recreational use of the SIRC not be permitted to be constrained in the future.

The following comments are in response to the three submissions received by the Department of Planning and Environment:

1. Transport for NSW

The SIRC has been involved in developing and coordinating traffic management plans (TMP's) for major events hosted at the venue for twenty years. All plans are prepared by suitably qualified practitioners in accordance with RMS Guidelines. Key stakeholders (including Penrith Police) are consulted in the preparation of TMP's which are submitted to RMS and Penrith City Council's Traffic Management Committee for approval.

Developing and submitting a TMP for an upcoming special event is a necessary prerequisite in event planning and essential for producing a safe and well-managed event. The Office of Sport is well aware of the need to prepare comprehensive TMP's that are safe, logistically efficient, technically sound and sensitive to the needs of local business and residents.

Note: Detective Inspector Grant Healey - Police Local Area Command, has advised that the Penrith Police have no objections to the Office of Sport's Section 96(2) Modification Application for SIRC. In such cases, the Police do not tender a submission.

2. Penrith City Council

The events and activities conducted at SIRC tessellate with Penrith City Council's "Adventure Vision" for the LGA and feature predominantly in Council's *Event Prospectus* and *Penrith Visitor Guide*.

I acknowledge Council's comments regarding the SIRC and Penrith Whitewater Stadium and the ability of these venues to 'accommodate a wide range of recreational uses and activities'. Within the Draft Vision Plan for the Penrith Lakes Parkland, both venues reside within a designated 'Sports and Events Precinct'. This precinct is a hub for sport and a range of complementary commercial uses such as tourism and events. The location and character of this precinct supports a broad spectrum of recreational uses that readily comply with the existing conditions of consent. No complaints have ever been received by residents of the Waterside Estate in respect to the day-to-day recreational use of the SIRC.

The mainstream recreational use of SIRC cannot be fettered by new and potential residential estates. Where events (e.g. Defqon.1 music festival) and activities (e.g. tandem skydiving) cannot be conducted within the latitude of existing consent, they are referred to Penrith City Council (or the Industry Assessments Branch) for approval.

3. Penrith Lakes Development Corporation (PLDC)

On behalf of PLDC, AECOM has raised seven objections. The following comments are offered in response:

- 3.1 The latest application has drawn extensively on the original Statement of Environmental Effects because it is substantially the same development. The Office of Sport is not seeking to modify the range of recreational uses permitted under the consent or the prescribed conditions governing them. The only requested change is to delete the time limit on the consent as given in Condition A3.
- 3.2 As stated above, the new application is fundamentally the same as the original application. It's not clear what evidence PLDC expect the Office of Sport to provide that attests to this.
- 3.3 The long term impacts of the 'permanent use' of the site (with reference to traffic, parking, land use and infrastructure) are not expected to change from when the consent was first granted in October 2004. It is acknowledged that any fundamental change would warrant a separate DA application to the appropriate consent authority.

In terms of management and mitigation measures, it is noted that the SIRC currently operates under a lease arrangement with the Office of Strategic Lands representing the Minister Administering the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act as the landowner.

- 3.4 The relationship the 'permanent SIRC' will have with potential and future land uses is recognised within the Draft Vision Plan for the Penrith Lakes Parkland. The Vision Plan acknowledges the 1987 Deed of Agreement between PLDC and the NSW Government and is mindful of the future use of the site and the additional work that will be done to develop the parkland. The Vision Plan identifies active and passive recreation areas as well as urban development. It creates the framework for the future and establishes the significant values of the site and provides for its gradual and sequential development.
- 3.5 The development is assessed as being in accordance with the Draft Vision Plan for the Penrith Lakes Parkland. This assurance has been given in writing by the Director of the Office of Penrith Lakes (a copy is attached to the application). The Vision Plan supports the range of activities and uses of the SIRC as it resides within the Sports & Events Precinct and integrates with the other six Precincts, including with respect to planning instruments and development controls.

Further applications would be proposed in the future to achieve the desired outcomes for the land to which SIRC relates as set out in the Draft Vision Plan, if appropriate. It is not clear the basis for AECOM's concerns that the proposed modified development would jeopardise this happening in the future.

- 3.6 As with the original application, the modified application is not prescriptive with respect to the range of recreational uses proposed for the site. The application seeks consent for recreation in broad terms, i.e. it is not feasible to provide a definitive list of all activities that may occur at SIRC, nor is it considered necessary to do so, or to require development consent for each individual activity. It is noted that this approach was adopted by the Department for the Sydney Showground at Sydney Olympic Park (a comparable event and

activity venue) and is consistent with the consent provided at Sydney's other regional parklands. As stated previously, any events that cannot be conducted within the latitude of existing consent, are referred to Penrith City Council (or the Industry Assessments Branch) for approval.

- 3.⁷ With respect to the planning instrument pertaining to the site, the Penrith Lakes Statement Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) draws on the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No.11. In fact clause 11 of the Penrith Lakes SEPP is identical to clause 11 of the SREP No.11 on which the original SIRC *Use For Recreation* Statement of Environmental Effects is based.

Therefore, under the clause the proposed development, being recreation, is a permissible use.

The 1987 Deed of Agreement between PLDC and the NSW Government and the 1984 Penrith Lakes Scheme – Regional Environmental Study all contain references to rehabilitating the quarry site as a major water-oriented recreation facility for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of western Sydney and of the State as a whole. These and other assorted State and Local Government planning documents all acknowledge the increasing population growth in the region and the demand for leisure opportunities and requirement for a wide range of recreation facilities and services. PLDC's own Concept Plans make reference to the community and recreational value of the site. Specifically,

'The Scheme completion will provide a vast new public facility for Sydney, far larger than any recreation area in the Metropolitan Area, including Centennial Park, Bi-Centennial Park and Sydney Olympic Park combined. Penrith Lakes will be the largest and most comprehensive recreational setting (outside the National Parks) to be found anywhere in Australia. The recreational facilities will be designed to cater for a wide range of activities including international and local competitive sports, adventure sports, commercial water fun parks, a variety of water based activities including swimming, sailing, kayaking, fishing as well as horse riding, cycling, picnicking, and quieter pursuits such as bird watching and hiking along the Great River Walk or in the 'wilderness' areas. These activities will be complimented by other cultural, commercial and recreational operations such as cafes, restaurants, shops, accommodation and other facilities for tourists and visitors.'

Being for recreational use, the SIRC proposal is consistent with PLDC's expressed vision and the ultimate intent of the Penrith Lakes Scheme to provide for a variety of recreation opportunities within the Penrith Lakes, and therefore assists in implementing the scheme for its intended purpose.

As the land involved is only the SIRC, the use will in no way adversely affect the implementation of the overall Penrith Lakes Scheme. In fact, it is considered the proposed use assists in the implementation of the Scheme by providing for recreation use.

The SIRC has demonstrated an ability to operate and comply with the '*Use of SIRC for Recreation*' conditions for over a decade without any issues. The Office of Sport

trusts that the information provided in response to the three submissions received satisfactorily addresses the concerns and questions raised.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Flynn', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kevin Flynn
Venue Manager, SIRC
Sport and Recreation

5 May 2016