

MAY 18, 2026

Mr Jeffrey Peng

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

RE: Emirates One&Only MP06_0310-Mod 4 - Temporary Changes to Helicopter Transport

Objection to the proposal and request that it be refused

I object to the proposal by Emirates Hotels (Australia) Pty Ltd to increase helicopter flights to the Wolgan Valley Resort from 14 return flights per week to 105 return flights per week (or a maximum of 15 return flights per day), reducing to 50 per week (or a maximum of 10 per day) once practical 2WD access is restored to Wolgan Valley, as well as to the proposed change to the flight path.

Deficiencies in process, consultation and transparency

The proposal represents substantial modification to an approved State Significant Development (SSD). It's concerning that the proposal has progressed to public exhibition without adequate supporting information, consultation or transparency. In particular:

- There is no updated Environmental Impact Statement.
- There has been no engagement with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).
- There has been no meaningful community consultation, including with:
 - impacted residents and landholders; and
 - current and potential users of Wollemi National Park and the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area.
- A very short timeframe has been allowed for the community to make a considered review of the Modification Report.

Reliance on approved conditions and expectations

I have been a landowner in Wolgan Valley since 2016 and a resident since 2019. My property comprises 48 hectares, with more than 95% native bushland.

The primary reason for purchasing this property was Wolgan Valley's peaceful natural environment, its wilderness character, and its location surrounded by National Parks and State Forests, enabling a direct and ongoing connection with nature.

In making this decision, I relied on the strict conditions attached to the original approval of the Emirates Resort, which were intended to protect these characteristics.

The proposed changes to helicopter operations extend significantly beyond the scope of the previous approval and would materially alter the amenity currently enjoyed by Wolgan Valley residents and visitors

Acoustic and topographical impacts

The acoustic assessment in the Modification Report does not adequately consider the unique topography of the Wolgan Valley.

My property is in a narrow section of the valley with east and west escarpments several hundred metres high, and where the width of the valley is around 1 kilometre. This geography results in sound carrying significantly further than in flatter landscapes.

For example:

- Campers on the top of the escarpments generate audible noise at my property. This includes noise from normal camping setup activities, music and lively conversation.
- Noise from properties several kilometres to the north is also clearly audible due to echoing effects.

Current helicopter movements over my property are already generating significant noise on a regular basis. These impacts would be substantially increased under the proposed flight volumes and altered flight path.

Impact on wildlife and ecological values

The same acoustic and disturbance impacts would apply, and likely be magnified, for native wildlife.

The valley and surrounding escarpments support:

- wedge-tailed eagles regularly circling from the escarpment into the valley;

- black cockatoos moving between escarpments and through the valley (including to and from the Capertee Valley) on an almost daily basis;
- peregrine falcons traversing from escarpment to valley floor;
- multiple frog species (with narrow breeding call windows);
- reptiles, including at least two snake species;
- numerous insect and spider species;
- native mammals including macropods and wombats.

The proposed flight path would directly intersect with established flight corridors and habitats.

Given that a new flight path is proposed, it is unacceptable that no comprehensive assessment of ecological impacts has been undertaken.

Lack of demonstrated need

The Modification Report does not adequately substantiate the need for the proposed increase in helicopter movements, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Historically:

- The resort has successfully transported guests via specialised 4WD vehicles from Wallerawang.
- These arrangements have proven effective, and no evidence has been provided to explain why they are no longer viable.

Further:

- The Report relies on outdated assumptions regarding the timeframe for restoration of 2WD access.
- The previously cited 7–10 year timeframe has since been revised to a significantly shorter period.
- Recent communication from resort management indicates that reopening timelines remain uncertain, with August described as highly ambitious and late-year reopening more likely.

This is consistent with the fact that bookings are not currently available.

Accordingly, the scale of the proposed increase in helicopter use is not justified by current circumstances.

Conclusion

The proposal represents a significant and unjustified departure from the conditions of the approved SSD, with substantial and inadequately assessed impacts on residents, the natural environment and wildlife.

The application is characterised by:

- insufficient supporting evidence
- inadequate environmental and acoustic assessment
- absence of meaningful community consultation
- lack of demonstrated need

Accordingly, the proposal should be refused in its entirety.