

9 September 2010

WINNEL APOLOGY - STATEMENT BY STEPHEN BYRON

I welcome the apology that will be given to me by Bob Winnel at 10am on Monday in the NSW Supreme Court and I accept it unreservedly.

The public debate surrounding Mr Winnel and the Village Building Company attempting to have rural land at Tralee rezoned for residential development is an important debate to have, particularly because it has the potential to negatively affect so many people.

It is appropriate that the public be aware of the issues surrounding building homes under flightpaths and how this would ultimately impact on the residents of Canberra and Queanbeyan who would be forced to share the aircraft noise load in the future.

This issue concerns the whole community and the longer term potential for people and businesses across the Capital region. It goes beyond just the consideration of a single development.

Notwithstanding that those contributing to the discussion will have their own differing views to share, to be in the public interest a healthy, robust debate must be based on fact, not erroneous personal attacks.

This apology is welcome reparation by Mr Winnel for stepping outside the boundaries of what is acceptable in public debate.

I have been saying consistently that Tralee is under a major departure flight path, such that residents at Tralee would suffer significantly from aircraft noise and that would inevitably lead to noise sharing for the Canberra and Queanbeyan community. It is pleasing that Mr Winnel has acknowledged as “untrue” his description of my position as “false scaremongering”.

A full transcript of the apology to be read by Mr Winnel in court on Monday is attached.

For further information, please contact Jane Seaborn - 0414 829 282

What others have said about the Tralee development:

- **the Commonwealth Government** “...*The Australian Government’s primary objection to the proposed rezoning of South Tralee to allow residential and other noise sensitive developments is the loss of benefits that such action will have for the broader community in NSW and the ACT... The assertion that no residences in South Tralee are under flight paths is incorrect*” – Submission to Queanbeyan City Council dated 24 March 2010
- **the Minister for Transport**– “*The Australian Government remains strongly opposed to incompatible development under existing airport flight paths, particularly in Greenfield sites where alternate options are available...I am seeking your support to postpone, as a minimum, any approvals in relation to residential or other noise-sensitive development in the Tralee area until we can agree a more appropriate national land-use approach for the remaining Greenfield sites around our major national airports...*” Anthony Albanese, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, writing to the NSW Premier 24/06/09
- **Airservices Australia** “...*aircraft noise is very likely to become a major issue for potential future residents of South Tralee*” – Submission to Queanbeyan City Council dated 15 April 2010
- **the ACT Government** – “*the ACT Government has consistently opposed residential development at South Jerrabomberra (which encompasses Poplars, North Tralee and South Tralee) and has made a number of detailed submissions on the matter over recent years*” Andrew Cappie-Wood Chief Executive, Chief Minister’s Department, 1/04/10;
- **Qantas** “*Development of the proposed land for housing will provide an unacceptable standard of living for its future residents and will constrain future airport, commercial and industrial development...The proposed development at Tralee in its current form will act as a major disincentive for Qantas to continue to invest in further noise abatement solutions...*” Letter to the Premier of NSW 31 March 2009
- **Virgin Blue** “...*we believe action to prevent the rezoning of land under Canberra airport’s flight path is in the public interest and is consistent with broader State and national strategic infrastructure and regional development objectives...*” Submission to Queanbeyan City Council dated 21 December 2009
- **United Airlines** “*We advocate against residential development at Tralee given the impact it would have on future airport operations...and call upon the NSW Government and Queanbeyan City Council to cease its support of the project.*” Submission to Queanbeyan City Council dated 2 December 2009
- **Board of Airline Representatives of Australia** “*The foreseeable outcome of residential development in that area will be noise complaints by the residents... It is inevitable that adverse effects on the regions tourism, business and government interests will ensue...it is an act of extremely poor planning to approve development of up to 5,000 new houses within the high noise corridor under Canberra Airports flight paths...*” Submission to Queanbeyan City Council dated 3 December 2009
- **An Independent Review** of land release in the Queanbeyan local government area commissioned by the NSW Department of Planning which found that “*residential use of land affected by aircraft noise should be avoided*” and specifically that “*the Tralee site should not be considered for residential development*”; Independent Review Panel, Report to the NSW Minister for Planning, August 2006

To be read by Mr Winnel in the NSW Supreme Court, Monday 13 September 2010

“Apology by Robert Winnel

On 13 November 2008 I made comments during an interview broadcast on ABC Radio Station 666 during a debate with Mr Stephen Byron, the Managing Director of Canberra Airport.

In those comments I alleged that Mr Byron lied to listeners when he said that Canberra Airport had made much smaller political donations than Village Building Company. I also alleged that he had engaged in false scaremongering. I accept that both of these allegations were untrue. I retract all such allegations without reservation and I apologise to Mr Byron for any hurt to him and to his family that has occurred by reason of those allegations.”