



Trish Doyle MP

Member for Blue Mountains



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New South Wales Parliament Legislative Assembly

Western Sydney Airport

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On behalf of my Blue Mountains community, I rise today to question the value of a second Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek.

Now that the Abbott and Turnbull Federal Government has decided to go ahead with their airport, I want to place on the record the unacceptable impacts my community will be forced to bear as a result of their decision.

The recently released Environmental Impact Statement shows that there will be a concentration of arriving flight paths above Winmalee, Springwood, Blaxland, Glenbrook and Warrimoo in the lower Blue Mountains, with planes flying over at five to seven thousand feet.

By 2030, there will be 100 incoming flights per day. That's an average of 1 every 15 minutes. By 2050 there will be 280 flights - every 5 minutes.

The political decision has been made by the Abbott Turnbull Government that this airport shall operate without a curfew, so these flights will run all night, causing a constant disturbance to locals in my electorate.

This is demonstrably unfair.

It is not good enough for the people of the inner city to live by one set of rules while residents of Western Sydney must live by another.

If Mascot airport is to retain its curfew, then Badgerys Creek airport must have one too.

On the question of the environment, the EIS analysis says very little of any substance about the potential impact on the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area of "aircraft overflight" above our National Parks.

Since substantial sections of the World Heritage listed area and our drinking water catchment will be beneath the new flight paths, the EIS must address ways to protect these areas instead of pretending that because the proposed flight paths are “indicative only” that it can’t yet analyse those impacts.

If the airport goes ahead in spite of all these valid concerns we will see congestion on our roads exacerbated because of the Conservatives’ ideological aversion to building rail infrastructure.

If Malcolm Turnbull is going to build his airport, then he must build public transport links to Sydney CBD, Parramatta and Penrith as well.

Otherwise, not only will he be building an airport many local residents don’t want, he will be blighting Western Sydney with crippling traffic congestion as well.

Our local Federal Member, Louise Markus, has failed in her duty to represent her electorate.

She has allowed her Government to plough ahead with an airport that had long been off the agenda.

It is imperative that the Blue Mountains community makes it clear to Mrs Markus what they think of her plan to build an airport on our doorstep.

In fact, residents who have yet to digest the significance of the airport proposal and the impact it will have on their homes and their lives may have no other option but to contact Mrs Markus directly, because very shortly the window of opportunity to respond to the Environmental Impact Statement will close.

Our community has just one month left to respond to a 4000 page document which, if implemented in the form and function it describes, will permanently change our local neighbourhoods.

As my old friend Councillor Mick Fell pointed out recently to a packed audience of concerned residents at Blue Mountains Council chambers, there was a longer consultation period for the Council’s new Green Bins initiative than has been provided for the airport proposal!

This sneaky rush job smacks of a cynical, high handed Federal Government which is run by a wannabe aristocrat from Point Piper.

A wannabe aristocrat, who it must be remembered, is madly trying to deliver on the Captains Calls made by his failed predecessor, the Member for Knights and Dames.

So my message on behalf of the people of the Blue Mountains is this:

We will not be blindsided by the ludicrous proposals in Mr Turnbull’s EIS.

We will not sit back and let our way of life be irreversibly destroyed.

And we certainly will not let any airport development jeopardise our pristine World Heritage environment, or interfere in our RFS's efforts to protect us from bushfires.

I have been distributing an EIS submission template throughout the lower Mountains towns that will be directly impacted by the airport development so that the voice of the Blue Mountains is heard loud and clear on this issue.

In closing, I pay tribute to the hard work of many committed activists and our local representatives who have taken up the fight against the proposals in the EIS - Mayor Mark Greenhill, Susan Templeman, and of course, our local aviation experts Annette and Geoff Bennett are just a few.

This Parliament is not the forum where the argument about whether to build an airport will be won or lost.

Unfortunately, the decision is out of our hands.

For those of you in this place whose communities will be impacted, I implore you to contact your counterparts in the Federal Parliament and stand up for your constituents.