



## **MEDIA RELEASE – James Harker-Mortlock – Independent for Hume – Tuesday 5th March 2013**

### **WILTON RESIDENTS KEPT IN HOLDING PATTERN OVER SECOND SYDNEY AIRPORT SITE**

James Harker-Mortlock, independent candidate for the seat of Hume, made the following statement this morning :

“It is clear that both the ALP and the Liberal Party are prepared to keep the residents of Wilton in an holding pattern over the decision for the location of the proposed second Sydney airport.

It appears that both major parties believe that they can retain votes in marginal seats in Western Sydney by keeping the location of the proposed second Sydney airport undecided for as long as possible.

In the meantime, the residents of Wilton are kept up in the air, becoming more and more concerned as to the potential impacts of locating an airport at Wilton upon their families, their property values, their amenity of life and the environment in which they live.

Of course, the residents of Wilton live in Hume, which is regarded as a safe Liberal seat, so their concerns are of little importance to the major parties. The ALP appears to think it will not win Hume, so it can suggest that the airport be located at Wilton. The Liberal Party appears to think that it will win Hume, so there is no need to reject Wilton as a site for the airport.

The Liberal candidate for Hume talks of reducing the curfew at Kingsford Smith as a solution, although this suggestion is unlikely to be welcomed warmly by the Shadow Treasurer, whose electorate lies in the flight path, or by the residents of the inner suburbs of Sydney, many of whom live in Liberal electorates.

I call upon the Liberal Party to make a firm commitment not to locate the proposed second Sydney Airport at Wilton.

The ALP, through the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, appears to be delaying a decision by suggesting that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) needs to be completed for Wilton.

However, as the Stop Wilton Airport Group points out in its latest media release, an EIS was completed for Wilton in 1985 using almost exactly the same location for the airport as is being

suggested now. The 1985 EIS led the Hawke ALP Government to discard Wilton as a suitable location for an airport. The same reasons leading to that earlier decision are now only magnified – greater local population, significantly increased property development, greater demands on Sydney water catchment, expanded list of endangered flora and fauna, Dharawal National Park declaration, and increased mining activities to name a few.

The location of the second Sydney airport has been a policy dilemma for decades. Millions of dollars and hours of time have been spent on numerous studies. The majority of those studies show various locations in the Nepean area, including Badgery's Creek, and other sites further north, such as at Wilberforce, to be preferable to Wilton.

I call upon the major parties to put an end to the ongoing debate over the possible location of the second Sydney Airport at Wilton. Wilton should be discounted as a possible location for the proposed second Sydney airport.

I support the call from the Stop Wilton Airport Group (SWAG) for the Minister to release as soon as possible the Scoping Study for Wilton which was due to be available early this year.

ENDS

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