

Snowy Monaro Regional Council.

Ref: 10.2023.327.1

Proposed Development, 9 Airstrip Rd Polo Flat

Dear Council.

Thankyou for your notification of the proposed development referenced above, the construction of the Monaro Fire Control Centre. I have the following comments to make.

I am the owner of 6 Geebung St which is directly across the road from Fire Control. Currently the building is tenanted by 84 Engineering but previously I was the owner / occupier. As such I have a good understanding of the area and some of the issues created by having an emergency management facility located so close.

The primary issue for me with regards to this development is one of parking. Currently, and historically, there are already parking issues in this area. Various RFS and SES volunteers take it upon themselves to use surrounding properties for parking when attending training or call outs. On many occasions, when I occupied my building, I had cars parked all over my property including directly in front of my roller doors. I have been advised by 84 Engineering the problem still exists and this is despite approaches to Fire Control and directly to volunteers via notes placed on their windscreens. The issue becomes particularly problematic when there is a major incident and the number of cars in the street increases. I have had cars parked in my drive all day on occasions whilst the offenders are off doing what they do with the keys in their pocket. Obviously this means the cars cannot be moved until the owners return to base. Given the people involved are volunteers, as I have been in the past with Bredbo RFS, I have an understanding of the situation they face and have tried to be as accommodating as possible. However, it is not the role of neighbours to provide parking for volunteers and at times it directly affects the ability of these businesses to operate. There is also the issue of liability if someone's vehicle is damaged whilst parked without authorisation on a neighbours property. Who pays for damages?

After examining the supplied documents for the proposal, I note there are 43 parking spaces and 30 overflow parking spaces. There is a 7m wide vehicle access which will allow for on site heavy vehicles and also visiting heavy vehicles such as tankers and floats. I do not see parking provisions for visiting heavy vehicles. The parking provisions appear adequate and a significant improvement on the current arrangements for normal operations, however, inadequate for an emergency event. With the possibility for staffing of up to 100 people, that is potentially 100 cars. Over the years I have rarely observed staff arriving with more than one person in a car. Add to this the volunteers. Where will they park? In an emergency there could easily be a further 20 or 30 vehicles requiring parking. Many of these will be on site for 12 or more hours and when they leave replaced by other volunteers.

Before I can fully support this proposal, I would like to see the following.

A response from Fire Control detailing how high numbers of vehicles will be accommodated including the provisions for heavy vehicles.

A written undertaking from Fire Control to ensure their vehicles and those of the volunteers will no longer park on neighbouring properties. I would like to see how Fire Control plans to deal with the high number of vehicles in an emergency situation. I would like to see what steps they will take to ensure compliance from their staff and members in parking in designated areas. Finally, I would like to see a senior member of Fire Control personally visit each neighbour in Geebung street to explain how the arrangements will work and to make a commitment to each of them that RFS activities will not directly affect them.

Aside from the parking issue, I have no objections to this proposal. I would also like to state that I have no financial interest in this development , nor do I have any political donations or gifts to declare.

I look forward to a response from Council and the RFS.

Yours faithfully