



MEDIA RELEASE

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FORMER OLYMPIAN GRANT KENNY BACKS AVIATION HUB AT EVANS HEAD

Former Olympian and champion ironman Grant Kenny is part of a leading consortium proposing to purchase and redevelop Evans Head Aerodrome, creating an industrial aviation hub, a residential component and a museum at the heritage-listed site.

The Evans Head Airpark proposal includes developing at least 60 exclusive homes with direct access to flying facilities as well as an industrial complex attracting aviation-linked businesses to the area.

Acknowledging the significant role the aerodrome played in the training of pilots during World War II, the group is proposing to construct a museum on site, with the initial focus being the sole remaining Bellman Hangar which would be restored as part of the plan. An RAAF F-111 fighter bomber is also proposed to be displayed on site, once the aircraft are decommissioned in 2010. Ultimately the aim is to have a museum of such size and array of exhibits to act as a major tourism drawcard for Evans Head into the future.

A boutique motel and convention centre as well as camping facilities will also be established to provide further options to pilots and aviators, while still servicing the mainstream tourism custom.

The airpark would continue to offer vital community services to the residents of Evans Head, including maintaining existing air ambulance and fire fighting facilities as well as charter and general aviation related businesses. Regular public transport services are also planned to be established at the airstrip.

Mr Kenny, who co-owns the Curry-Kenny Aviation Group – Australia's largest privately owned aviation fleet with more than 110 aircraft – has pledged to establish a business on site, providing a crucial drawcard for other associated services.

The consortium is led by respected businessman and passionate aviator Peter Lynch, who currently heads mining exploration company Waratah Coal and brings more than 20 years of top-level industry experience to the table.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to develop a strong aviation hub along the Northern Rivers coastline,” Mr Lynch said. “The local community has done well to preserve this Historic Aerodrome having it heritage listed, an Airpark development was identified by the Heritage Council and Plan of Management as the best opportunity for the long term future of what is an important piece of our history”

“Our vision is to create a thriving aviation community by providing commercial and residential opportunities in the one spot – and all just 400m from some of the best beaches on the east coast.”

Mr Lynch is one of six key partners in the consortium, who come from the aviation, finance, development and marketing fields.

The consortium have enlisted the services of respected specialists and consultants to assist with the preparation the proposal to ensure the integrity of the heritage values are maintained while providing for a design which maximises the economic and community benefits.

The group has submitted their proposal to the Richmond Valley Council in response to its recent advertisement seeking expressions of interest in the site. “We are keen to hear from others who share our vision for the site, the transformation that has occurred at Temora in NSW is a great example of what can be achieved.”

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