

**MEDIA RELEASE****May 25, 2009****MAINTENANCE SERVICE BACKS AVIATION HUB AT EVANS HEAD**

A Sunshine Coast aircraft maintenance service has joined a leading consortium proposing to purchase and redevelop Evans Head Aerodrome on the far north coast of New South Wales to create 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.

Former Olympian Grant 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.

Aircraft Maintenance Specialists (AMS) Proprietor Mark Radford said his Caloundra-based company believed Evans Head Aerodrome could be redeveloped into a thriving multi-faceted airpark which would generate more jobs for the local community.

“We think the redevelopment would provide us with an opportunity to establish a new facility at Evans Head which would help us service our growing clientele in NSW,” Mr Radford said.

“We are interested in pursuing the potential to establish a business based on the successful model we have developed at AMS.

“We have the breadth of skills and experience within our company to offer not only employment but training for the development of specialised skills for the local community.”

The Evans Head Airpark 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.

The group proposes 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.

“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 said.

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

The group has submitted their proposal to the Richmond Valley Council in response to its recent advertisement seeking expressions of interest in the site. “

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