Housing supported in the right locations near Canberra Airport

The NSW Government today invited the community to have a say on a proposal to boost housing supply in areas around the Australian Capital Territory while also protecting Canberra Airport’s curfew-free status.

The proposal will ensure the airport is not impacted by inappropriate residential rezonings and allow existing landowners to do all the things they are currently permitted to do to their homes.

“NSW councils bordering the Australian Capital Territory are experiencing strong growth and we are working with these councils to ensure an adequate supply of housing,” Department of Planning and Infrastructure Deputy Director-General Richard Pearson said.

“This proposal represents a sensible and balanced approach which also recognises that Canberra Airport is a significant economic asset to the State’s south.

“The proposal will help to protect the airport’s 24-hour curfew-free passenger and freight operations.

“It does this by preventing land included in the Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) 20 noise contour around the airport from being rezoned for residential development and other noise sensitive uses, through a Ministerial Direction issued under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.”

The ANEF system is an Australian standard for measuring the impact of noise on buildings around airports. It takes into account current and projected aircraft movements, flight paths and the noise from different types of aircraft.

The proposed changes will apply to parts of Queanbeyan City, Palerang and Yass Valley local government areas. The Australian Capital Territory has its own planning controls for land use around the airport.

“Landowners within this area will not be disadvantaged and will be able to do all the things they are permitted to do under existing state and local planning instruments,” Mr Pearson said.

“For instance, they will be able to renovate, extend or knock down and rebuild their homes, or proceed with residential development that is already allowed under these plans - for example, building secondary dwellings and building on a vacant block.”

The proposal has been developed in response to concerns expressed by the Commonwealth Government, the ACT Government and the aviation industry about the potential for more housing to compromise the long term operations of the airport.
Mr Pearson said the NSW Government was still focused on providing more residential development in the region and the current proposal represented a consistent approach in the area.

“Late last year we supported a rezoning of land for residential development at South Tralee, about 11km from Canberra Airport.

“The rezoning allows up to 2000 dwellings, all of them outside ANEF 20, which will provide an important addition to housing supply and affordability in the region.

“We resolved at the time that residential development should only occur in areas outside the ANEF 20 noise contour.

“The proposal now on public exhibition until 10 May 2013 is consistent with that decision.”

The Department of Planning & Infrastructure is inviting community feedback on the proposal which is on exhibition at: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/proposals

Landowners in the affected areas will be individually notified by the department.

Media contact: Mark Skelsey (02) 9228 6275