

Opposition barracks pledge encouraging - developer

From our perspective it is encouraging to see that the Coalition, through sitting member Ian Macfarlane, have provided a clear undertaking to leave Borneo Barracks operational and in its present location.

This is a critical piece of Toowoomba's economic, social and defence infrastructure which has been an integral part of our community since the 1940s.

The loss of over 800 jobs, \$105m per year and 200 homes from our Toowoomba community would be a disaster and would hamper progress and development of our region at a number of levels.

While the present Federal Government have advised us via letter from the Defence Minister, Senator Faulkner (December 2009) that they have sent Defence back to the drawing board and have not accepted the advice of the Defence White Paper Audit pertaining to the establishment of Super Bases, we have seen no fur-

ther moves to set up the community consultation committee as advised by the Senator.

While the ALP are advising that there have been no bases named for closure, the Defence Association's Neil James quite openly names the bases in NSW, South Australia and Borneo Barracks in Queensland.

Mr James's rhetoric would have us believe that, as a community, we should just roll over and accept the inevitable closure of Borneo Barracks based on national defence interest and sound economics.

The rough economic modeling figures we have seen proposed for the establishment of Super Bases, by the industry experts, leads us to believe that they are anything but sound.

Furthermore, the Defence White Paper has nominated criteria for a defence base's location and strong community connectivity is one of them along with maintaining a high level of

Defence personnel acceptance of the area in which the base is located.

Borneo Barracks has all this and some more (based on Defences' consultants own research.)

Our community does not want any more spin on this issue. All we want is for the Federal Government to be honest and acknowledge the importance of Borneo Barracks to the Toowoomba region. - **Mac Stirling, Managing Director Lauder Pty. Ltd.**

* Attempts to secure a response from Labor candidate Chris Meibisch were unsuccessful - *Editor*.