

Military may use heritage land

Peter Gardiner | 19th September 2011

A⁺ A⁻ 

NOOSA'S eco-warriors fear Cooloola's hard-fought campaign to win World Heritage listing could be taken hostage by council permitting military training on environmentally sensitive Noosa North Shore land.

Noosa Parks Association has been told that the old World War II landing field that makes up a vital 482ha parcel of the land is to be used as a training ground for military helicopter pilots.

One possible client is the United Arab Emirates.

Council-owned Sunshine Coast Airport management has confirmed that the land, which the NPA says was promised for national park by the former Noosa Council, has been used for helicopter training for years.

The airport spokesman said Becker Helicopters, which used the site, had overseas training contracts. Council had closed the field to fixed wing aircraft other than ultra-lights but it was also used by model airplane enthusiasts.

A Becker spokesman is yet to confirm if the landing field is part of an overseas proving ground for military pilots but the company's website states that "most of our clients wish to remain anonymous due to the nature of dealing with government agencies of other countries".

"We have a select group of ex-military instructors whose mission is to exceed these standards and outcomes beyond those of the client's requirements.

"We offer a full in-house theory solution, detailed reporting and grading, assessments, wings graduation and streaming for reconnaissance, attack, air mobile, air transport or other support roles".

While council might view this military training as broadening its economic base, the NPA sees it as a non-complying use of a site designated "open space conservation zone" under the Noosa Plan.

"There has been an escalation of use of the landing ground over recent years and the Noosa Parks Association believes that there are now proposals being considered for helicopter training for foreign defence forces there," NPA spokesman Paul Summers said.

While a council reply has not been received to date, the Department of Environment and Resource Management said that it was working with the council to "rationalise public land tenure".

Advertisement

Deposit Bonus from Sportingbet

Sunny Coast residents Join today & receive up to \$200 in Deposit Bonuses!

[Click here!](#)

