

Call for Expressions of Interest Competitive Dialogue



Armidale Regional Airport

**Investment options for the Armidale
Regional Airport and adjoining
approved industrial, aviation and
business park development land**

Unleash the opportunities

www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au

Document Control Sheet

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Expression of Interest – Investment Options Armidale Regional Airport and Business Park

Competitive Dialogue

Closing – 2.30pm Tuesday, 19th March 2019

ARC18/2977

Section 1 Introduction

A cool change

Don't be fooled by the quaint and quiet tree lined streets, the manicured gardens and the gentle rolling tablelands of the New England High Country. Hidden behind the beautiful idyllic rural surrounds and the historic edifices of education is a burgeoning tech savvy, diverse global village oozing potential.

The Armidale Region is undoubtedly on the move and Armidale Regional Council is unleashing its potential by opening the door for creative thinkers, bold new business ventures, entrepreneurs, ideas people and positive thinkers to share their knowledge, energy and can do attitude to transform and grow the Armidale Region.

Boasting a strong and diverse economy the Armidale Region covers 8,621 square kilometres and a population of approximately 30,000 in the spectacular New England High Country area of northern NSW.

The city of Armidale is the service centre hub of the Armidale Region and is located along the New England Highway midway between the major metropolitan cities of Sydney and Brisbane. The Armidale region is serviced with daily return flights to Sydney and Brisbane in just over an hour and a regular rail service.

The Armidale Region's economy is anchored by a long established agricultural tradition of lamb, beef and wool production as well as an increasingly energetic digital economy and vibrant education services sector. Armidale is home to the University of New England - leaders in agricultural innovation and research, TAFE NSW Digital headquarters and the Australian Government's new home for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. Some of the finest private and public schools in the country are also located in Armidale and health care, retail and professional services are well represented. Blush tomatoes are grown in Guyra in one of Australia's largest and most advanced glasshouse facilities covering approximately 30 hectares. This relatively new horticultural industry has proven to be highly successful and a significant contributor to the local economy.

The surrounding towns and villages of Guyra, Black Mountain, Ebor, Hillgrove, Ben Lomond and Wollomombi are home to spirited and unique communities that all contribute to the outstanding liveability and prosperity of the Armidale region.

Bold new leadership

A new wave of leadership is driving innovation and change to ensure that the Armidale Region adapts to a constantly evolving technology driven world.

The new wave is led by an elected representative body ably supported by a new CEO and Executive Leadership Team. Armidale Regional Council is entering what is being called the Fourth Industrial Revolution - driven by technologies that would have been almost unthinkable when the current system of local government was put in place - and Council needs keep pace and take full advantage of this evolution.

We are transforming and are looking for opportunities to partner with progressive organisations and agencies to ensure we deliver high quality and efficient services to our community to achieve a vision for a socially and economically vibrant region well beyond today's generation.

Information for respondents and scope of offer

Council owns and operates the recently upgraded Armidale Regional Airport including a number of leases for privately operated air service organisations as well as a Rural Fire Service Air Base. Council also owns industrial zoned land adjacent to the Airport which has direct access to the New England Highway. According to figures from the RMS the New England Highway has approximately one million vehicle movements annually.

The intent of this Competitive Dialogue EOI is to reach out to the market to seek interest and to open dialogue between Council and innovative operators who share our vision for providing high quality services to the communities of the Armidale Region and the broader New England area.

The Council is open minded about how to optimise the development of the airport, its precinct and associated businesses. It is for this reason that we are seeking options from the market. This will be through a formal process that over a period of time and dialogue enables the Council to firm up its preferred options prior to a procurement process. This Competitive Dialogue EOI process will facilitate a 16week due diligence and options development stage and will investigate, address and formulate a final Tender Specification which would then be distributed to the final respondents enabling them to prepare their Tender response and submission.

To further the Business Park development, Council has made an application to the State Government to fund the initial subdivision development and anticipates a positive response by end of February 2019

The airport development land also has the benefit of conditional subdivision approval for 72 Industrial, Aviation and Business lots.

Currently there are approximately 12 commercial leases tied to the lands which relate to the occupation of and the undertaking of businesses, leasing floor space within the terminal, operation of the undercover secure carpark, hangar space and an existing service station. The annual rental return for all leases is approximately \$106,000. The full disclosure of these leases will only be made available to the final selected respondents invited to submit a final tender following the exchange of Confidentiality Agreements.

Competitive Dialogue Process – what does this mean?

The competitive dialogue process is a multi-stage model with three broad stages:

1. Expression of Interest; and,
2. Competitive Dialogue; and,
3. Request for Tender Process.

The Expression of Interest (EOI) covers the pre-qualification process to identify respondents in the market capable of not only delivering the solution, but also willing to work collaboratively to refine the solution. In fact, the EOI process, the invitation to and participation in dialogue, and the final tender document all form the total outline of the requirements. For this reason, the EOI is less to do with identifying respondents who are technically capable of delivering the requirements from the outset but rather the aim is to identify respondents that have the capacity and experience in engaging with clients and working collaboratively to develop a solution. This is quite a different approach to a standard procurement model where respondents are scored largely on their outputs rather than their ability to develop outputs.

The Competitive Dialogue further explores the selected EOI respondents to clarify specific responses and capabilities and further define the collective requirements which will be released as a Request for Tender. This process will follow a clear set of guidelines regarding communication, Intellectual Property and how it may be used/identified in the final Tender Specification, Confidentially and confirmation that all costs incurred by the Respondents participating in the Dialogue process will not be reimbursed by Council. The Guidelines would be circulated with the invitation to participate in the Competitive Dialogue.

Once the final specification has been developed, the competitive dialogue phase is formally terminated and the process returns to a standard model of controlled communication and information sharing. The specification are reissued to the short listed respondents whom participated through the Competitive Dialogue process in the form of a standard procurement process and is run in the traditional fashion with respondents required to respond to a locked tender box by a fixed date in a fixed format.

Armidale Regional Council has chosen the Competitive Dialogue approach as we are looking for innovative ideas and potential of reducing the cycle times normally associated with traditional tender process through collaborative specification development and reduction of negotiations through improved understanding of the total requirements.

An important advantage of Competitive Dialogue lies in the ability to have the specification developed by the collective respondents and associated experts. Council then, does not have to research and develop the specification in secrecy to protect the probity and retain competition in the process. This reduces preparation time and should significantly improve the quality, completeness and viability of the final specification. So to explore all options open for the future development of the Airport Precinct, Council proposes to undertake a Competitive Dialogue process with the selected respondents following the calling and assessment of Expressions of Interest.

Therefore, options can include but are not limited to:

- Ownership of the Business Park;
- Ownership of the Airport;
- Ownership and management of the Business Park;
- Ownership and management of the Business Park and Airport;
- Ownership or management of the Business Park and Airport singly or jointly;
- Leasing the Airport and Management of Operations
- Another governance and ownership Model.

Use of the Competitive Dialogue process will enable Armidale Regional Council to hone and refine the model, structure, terms and means by which it may divest or manage its assets prior to Tendering. Only those respondents invited and who choose to participate in the Competitive Dialogue can be invited to submit a Final Tender.

The Airport Precinct

The Armidale Regional Airport currently provides approximately 100 direct flights between Armidale and Sydney each week as well as 12 between Armidale and Brisbane. Daily return passenger flights serve travellers to Brisbane and Sydney, with onward connections nationally and internationally.

Armidale's Regional Airport currently serves 140,000 travellers annually however; our recent **\$10.5 million terminal expansion**, Provides for increased passenger capacity and the ability to support 200,000 pa visitors and 4,500 flights over the next decade. The expansion has included a larger terminal area with stunning architecture, more spacious check-in facilities, enhanced security, a VIP departure lounge, upgraded parking and food, beverage and retail facilities. The redevelopment is a gateway to international value-adding opportunities for the New England region's agricultural sector, specifically into Asia-Pacific markets and these will be further strengthened by plans for the commercial development of the Armidale Airport Business Park. *The airport is home to various aviation businesses including Fleet Helicopters, Super-Air, Edwards Aviation VIP Jet Charter, Go Fly, Armidale Aero Club and others.*



Figure 1 – New Terminal as viewed from Airside Apron

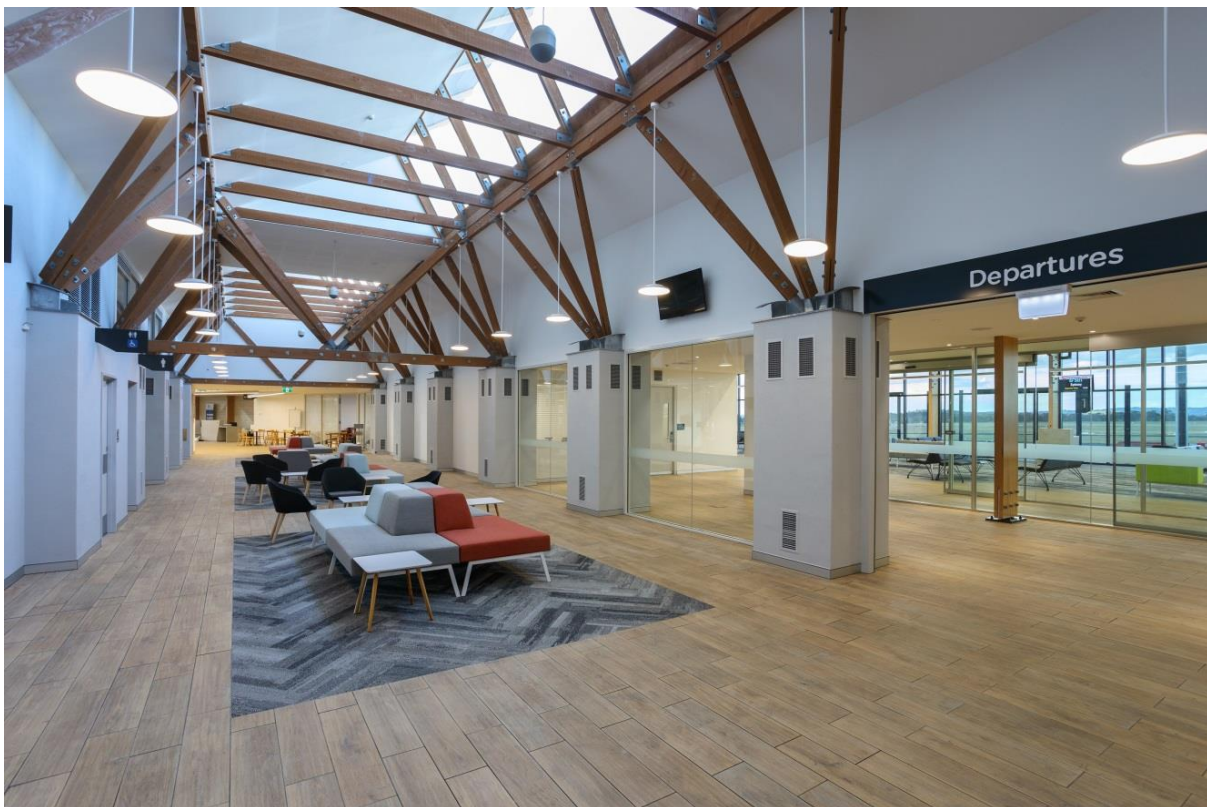


Figure 2 – Inside of new Terminal

The Airport and business park will be accessed by the new \$3.5 M roundabout (completion end of March 2019) providing excellent access into the Airport, the new Industrial, Aviation and Business Park development of Council and opposite a 50ha greenfield area currently being rezoned for industrial purposes. See Figures 3, 4 & 5.

The NSW Roads and Maritime Services statistics identifies that the New England Highway in and around this location, provides 1 Million traffic movements and some 230,000 heavy vehicle movements per annum. In addition, the new roundabout will be the main access point to the airport

providing exposure to some 140,000 passengers annually. 50% of these passengers then continue onto other national and international ports.

The Airport and Business Park is located only 5klms from the heart of Armidale and just 1klm south of the New England Highway – Waterfall Way intersection on the busy Tamworth/Armidale commute road, with full frontage of 2klm and excellent visual exposure to and from the New England Highway, which, at last, count has 1 Million traffic movements a year.



Figure 3 Round About under construction



Figure 4 Roundabout under construction



Figure 5 – Artist Impression of the Future Armidale Regional Airport

The Aviation & Business Park Development

Council owns approximately 36ha of vacant Industrial zoned land adjoining the Armidale Regional Airport. The NSW Northern Joint Regional Planning Panel considered and conditionally approved a staged 72 lot Industrial, Aviation and Business Park subdivision proposal in late 2017. Stage 1 of the subdivision development includes a total of 49 lots. See Figure 6 & 7.

Included in this approval is a new roundabout to give improved access from the New England Highway and which is currently under construction with a completion date of end of March 2019. The location of the new roundabout will provide direct highway access to the Armidale Regional Airport, Council's new subdivision and the future development of privately owned industrial land to the east of the highway.

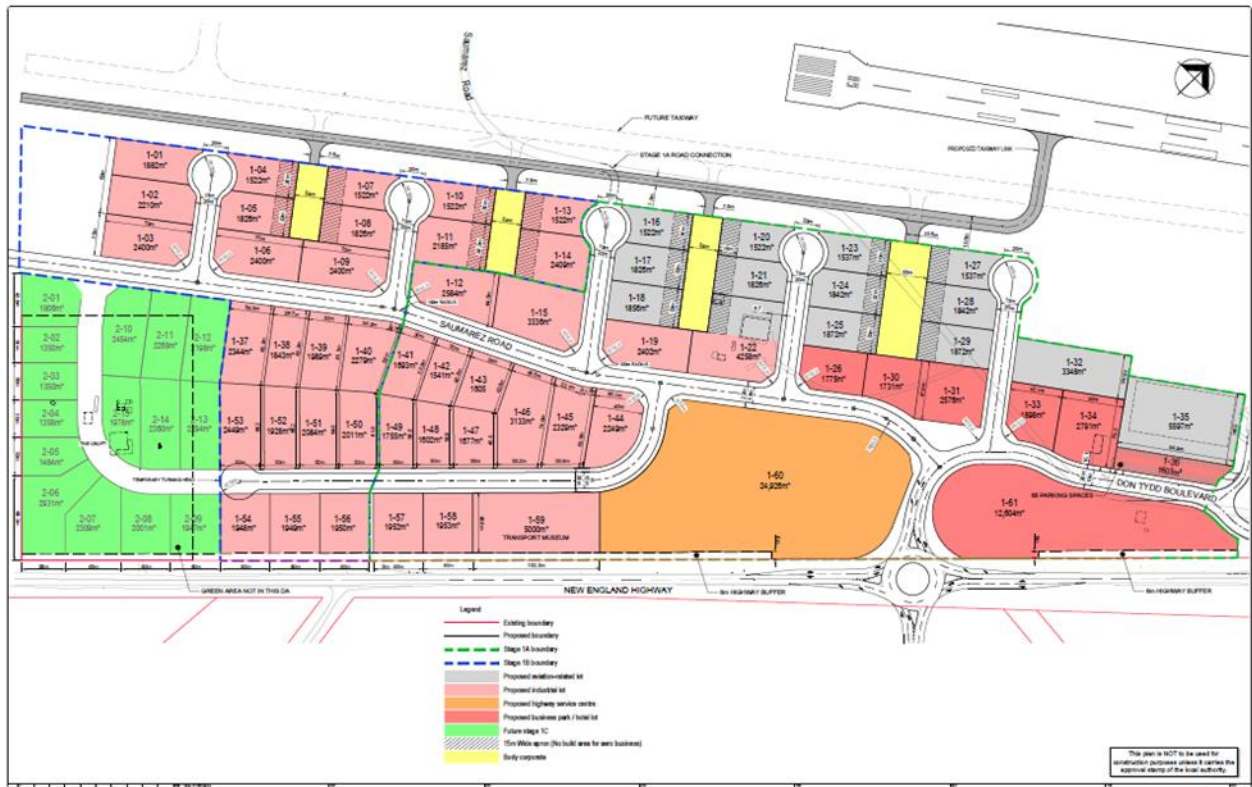


Figure 6 Plan of the sub division, including newly acquired Croft land shown in green

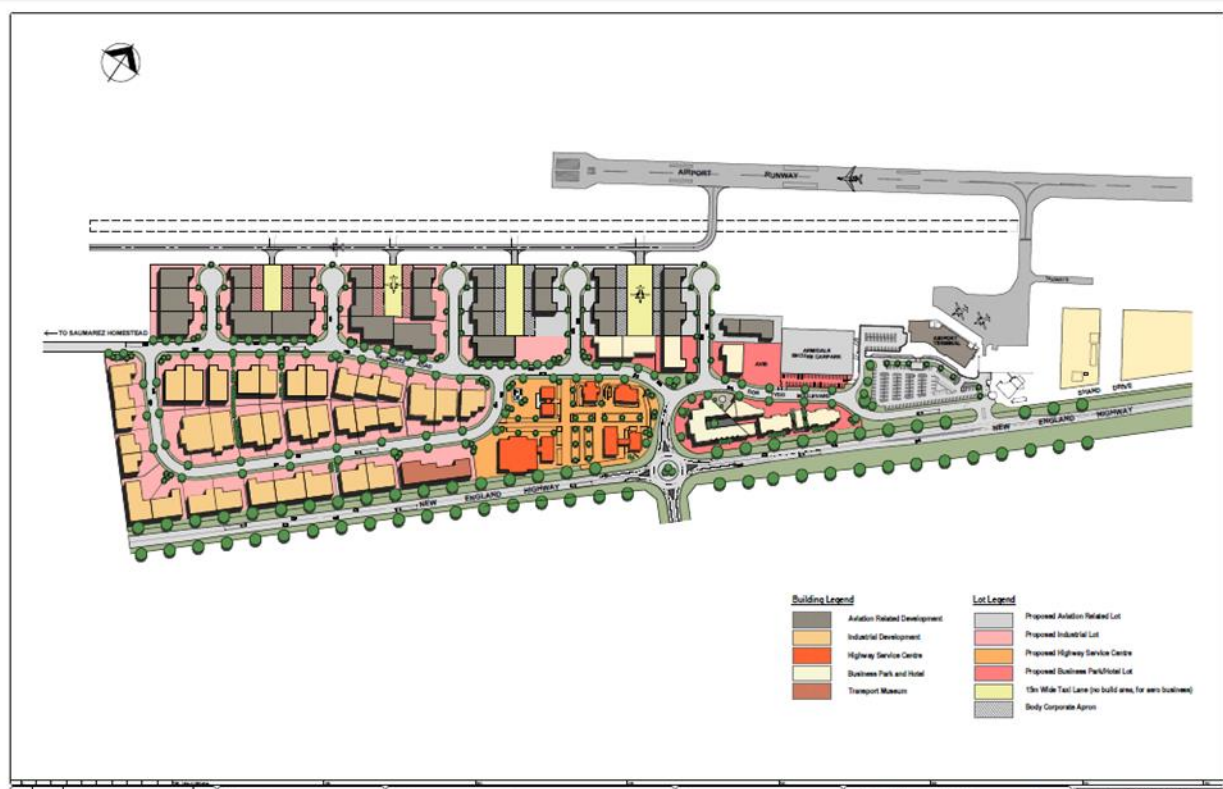


Figure 7– Concept Plan based on Embellished Plan

SECTION 2 Conditions of Responding

Responding

Lodgement of EOIs

EOIs will be received up until the closing time of **2.30pm on Tuesday 19th March 2019** and should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, Armidale Regional Council, citing the reference number - ARC18/2977.

EOI's lodged after the closing time specified will be deemed late and will not receive further consideration.

The preferred method is that proposals are submitted via Council's E-Tendering web site www.tenderlink.com/nesac. This site can also be accessed through Armidale Regional Council's web page www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au. Where EOIs are lodged electronically via this method a hard copy is not required to be posted. Proposals should be lodged in one document in either in Microsoft Word or Excel format or a PDF format. Drawings accompanying an electronic lodging of the EOI shall be in PDF format suitable for printing at A3 size.

If lodging via Tenderlink respondents should allow sufficient time to resolve unforeseen circumstances which may prevent you from making your submission prior to the close of EOIs.

To use Tenderlink you are required to be a registered user.

If you have problems with using the Etendering portal please contact the Tenderlink Help Desk on 1800 233 533 during business hours in the first instance.

Alternatively proposals can be lodged as follows:

by hand deposited in the Tender Box, Ground Floor, Civic Administration Building, 135 Rusden Street, Armidale.

by mail- 'Attention Tender Box,' Armidale Regional Council, PO Box 75A Armidale NSW 2350.

EOIs lodged by hand or mail, are to be enclosed in an envelope endorsed with the RFT Number **ARC18/2977**, Description and/or the Closing Date.

Emails and Facsimile submissions will not be accepted.

EOIs delivered by **courier** will be accepted and may be placed directly into the Tender Box, Ground Floor, Civic Administration Building, 135 Rusden Street, Armidale

EOIs will be assessed against the assessment criteria shown in the EOI document. Once submitted, an EOI may only be varied to provide further information by way of explanation or clarification or to correct a mistake or anomaly. Such variations shall not substantially alter the original EOI.

Ownership of Documentation

All EOIs and supporting material lodged in response to this request will become the absolute property of Council and will not be returned to the respondent at the conclusion of the EOI process.

Each respondent grants to the Council the right to copy its EOI and all supporting material and to do any other thing necessary for the evaluation of EOIs and administration of purchasing materials, including entering the information on a database, reproducing the information in electronic or print form and distributing information to third parties.

Respondent to inform himself / herself

The Respondent shall bear all costs or expenses incurred by it in preparing and lodging an EOI and participation in the Competitive Dialogue process. In addition, no extra allowances, or additional or supplementary payments will be paid to the Respondent as a result of neglect to have examined:

- (a) all parts of this EOI document;
- (b) all information made available and/or all information obtainable by the making of reasonable enquiries;
- (c) satisfied him/her as to the correctness and sufficiency of its offer.

EOI Selection Criteria

The criteria to be used in assessing the EOI's and determining which respondents are invited to participate in the Competitive Dialogue process is outlined below. The criteria are not in any particular order however it should be noted that this process is really about understanding what sustainable innovative ideas, plans, business models can be brought to the table for Armidale Regional Council and the operation of the Airport and Business Park

- Financial capability and capacity of the respondent to sustainably manage the operations of the airport and/or business park;
- Outline of future plans/ developments for both the Airport and the Business Park. Including your operating model and ability to reinvest and grow the airport and its precinct;
- Demonstrated experience and qualifications of the respondents management team;
- Confirmation of the ability to meet the dates outlined in Schedule 5 or the provision of an alternative Work Plan;
- Demonstrated capability and delivery of innovative management options providing positive outcomes for shareholders/communities from nominated – Referee checks and publicly available information.

Respondents may provide additional detail addressing the above criteria in support of their submission. The canvassing of the Councillors, staff or Council representatives outside of the Competitive Dialogue phase will void consideration. Respondents should note that the degree of compliance with the specified conditions will be an important consideration in the process of

evaluating EOIs. Failure to provide information requested in the EOI document may lead to no further consideration of the EOI response. Council is not bound to accept any or all EOI's, or proceed to the next stage. An EOI is not accepted until written notice of acceptance has been delivered to or posted to the respondent at the address nominated in the EOI.

EOI Validity Period

The EOI must be valid for a period of 120 days from close of EOIs.

Statement of Business Ethics

Armidale Regional Council's principles of Business Ethics establish obligations of standards of behaviour by Contractors, Suppliers and Council Officers including the supply of goods and services to Council. Respondents should read the Business Ethics Statement before entering into any agreement with Council. Copies are available from Council's Customer Service Centre or from www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au

Confidentiality

Any information disclosed or obtained from either Council or the Respondent about this EOI must be kept strictly confidential except in the situations where disclosure is:

- 1) necessary in the process of assessing EOIs, or where Council discloses all or part to any of its advisers and consultants or where Council publishes in its business papers, EOI prices and other details of the EOI as may be required and permitted by law.
- 2) under compulsion of law or it is already public knowledge, or
- 3) with the written consent of Council.

Right to Clarify

Council reserves the right to seek clarification with one or more of the respondents after close of EOIs in order to clarify the contents of any EOI and/or clarify amendments that do not substantially alter the original submission.

Value Adding Services

Respondents are encouraged to identify innovative ways to add value to this project at reduced or nil cost. This may include:

- making recommendations to achieve improvements to the brief
- alternate ideas must be accompanied by a conforming EOI

Where respondents provide innovative ways to value ad they should complete the table of value added services located at Schedule 7.

Conflict Of Interest

Councillors, Council staff and Contractors/Respondents are required to comply with Council's Code of Conduct and demonstrate ethical conduct. Please complete Conflict of Interest Form at Schedule 2.

Non-conforming EOI

The respondent is to submit a conforming EOI to enable them to be considered for the next stage of the process.

If the respondent:

- a) fails to properly complete the EOI form and Schedules; or
- b) includes terms and conditions which are contrary to the stated terms and conditions;

then, at the discretion of Council, the EOI may be deemed to be non-conforming and may receive no further consideration.

Collusive EOIs

Any participation in or condoning of a collusive activity by a respondent shall lead to the immediate disqualification of the respondent or of all respondents involved. Any respondent involved may be barred from tendering for any further contracts with Council. A collusive activity includes but is not limited to:

- (a) any agreement as to who should be the successful respondent;
- (b) any meeting of respondents to discuss their EOIs prior to the submission to Council, unless Council is present at that meeting(s);
- (c) any exchange of information between respondents about their EOIs;
- (d) any agreement for the payment of money or a reward or benefit for unsuccessful respondents by the successful respondent
- (e) any agreement or collaboration of respondents to fix prices, rates of payment of industry association fees or conditions of contract;
- (f) the submission of a "cover submission", being an EOI submitted as genuine but which has been deliberately priced in order not to win the contract.

Non-Conditional

Respondents shall detail any special conditions, not otherwise covered by this EOI that shall apply.

Section 3 Response Form and Schedules

(All of Section 3 must be returned)

EOI FORM AND SCHEDULES

NOTE: All schedules must be submitted to be a conforming EOI

EOI Form

The Respondent

(Party/Business/Consortium

/Entity submitting)

(insert name/s)

A.C.N:

A.B.N:

Respondent Representative:

(Authorised Officer)

**Respondent Registered
Address:**

Phone :

E-mail :

Hereby Submits to:

(the Principal)

Armidale Regional Council

PO Box 75A

Armidale, NSW 2350

Signed by:

(Authorised Officer)

Name (in block letters):

Date:

Official capacity:

Witness (signature):

Name (in block letters):

Expression of Interest Checklist

To ensure a Complying EOI is submitted, the Respondent must confirm that all schedules have been provided by completing the Submission Verification Schedule below.

Respondent's response Schedule Checklist Information	Items required by Council for a confirming EOI	Items provided (Cross/tick each box as applicable)
SCHEDULE NO. 1 – Relevant Staff and Experience	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 2 – Conflict of Interest	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 3 – Financial capacity	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 4 Outline Innovative Future Development Plans	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 5– Project Work Plan	X	
SCHEDULE NO.6– Referee check	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 7 – Additional Information/ Value Added	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 8– Declaration - Capacity to Obtain CASA and other Government Approvals to Operate a Passenger Airport	X	
SCHEDULE NO. 9 – Statutory Declaration	X	

The respondent has completed, signed and attached relevant documents for the schedule items checked. By providing this Submission Verification, the respondent confirms the content of all material included in the checklist items

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 1 – Relevant Staff and Experience

Name and Experience of Supervisory Staff to be engaged directly on this project. Include Off-Site Project Management Personnel and On-Site Supervisory Staff.

Name	Position	Qualifications and Experience

Experience on similar Projects in the past 5 years.

Project Description	Date	Client	Client Contact Name & Phone	Value

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 3 – Financial Capacity

Please detail your financial capacity (last two years P&L Statements) to acquire the property, operate the airport and develop the land, especially to meet cash flow and other financial obligations.

[illegible]

Name of Party/Business: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 4 – Outline Innovative Future Development Plans

Armidale Regional Council is looking for innovation in relation to how to operate its Airport and Business Park and has no preconceived idea(s) and would rather industry determine the best operating model. Please detail your proposed plans for both the Airport and the Airport Business Park and what is your operating model you are recommending as noted earlier in this Competitive Dialogue EOI.

[illegible]

Name of Party/Business: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 5 – Project Work Plan

Draft Project Work Plan

Stages	Timeframe
Call Expressions of Interest	By 26 th February 2019
Non compulsory site visit day	During week 4 th – 8 th March 2019
Receipt of Expressions of Interest	By 19 th March 2019
Consider EOI's	By 21 st March 2019
Invite Selected Respondents to Competitive Dialogue Process	By 9 th April 2019
Commence Due Diligence and Competitive Dialogue Process	By 23 rd April 2019
Finalise final specification and tender process	By 8 th July 2019
Invite final selected Respondents to prepare their final tender	By 15 th July 2019
Tenders close	By 27 th August 2019
Consider Tenders	By 16 th September 2019
Present Report to Council	By 30 th October 2019
Notify successful Tenderer	By 4 th November 2019
Exchange Contracts	By 18 th November 2019
Transition period	6 th January 2020 to 2 nd April 2020
Settlement	By 2 nd March 2020
Final Handover	2 nd April 2020

Name of Party/Business: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 6– Referee Check

Submitter must advise of 3 referees:

Company	
Project	
Contract Award Value	
Referee name	
Referee phone	

Company	
Project	
Contract Award Value	
Referee name	
Referee phone	

Company	
Project	
Contract Award Value	
Referee name	
Referee phone	

Name of Party/Business: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 7 – Additional Information / Value Added

The Respondent may provide additional information with its EOI to assist Council in evaluation of the EOI or to determine whether the Respondent will be able to successfully finalise the contract and deliver within the identified time frames.

Council welcomes any additional suggestions and proposals to value add or embellish this project.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

Name of Party/Business: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Schedule 8 – Declaration - Capacity to Obtain CASA and other Government Approvals to Operate a Commercial Passenger Airport

I/We confirm that after making the appropriate enquiries with CASA and other Government Departments and Authorities, I/We confirm that we have the Capacity to gain the necessary approvals, licences and authority to manage and operate the Armidale Airport.

Signature of Respondent:

Subscribed and declared at:

This:**Day of** *(Year)*.....

Before me..... *(Print name)*

Witness..... *(Signature)*

Schedule 9 – Statutory Declaration on Non-Collusive EOI

I, (Print name),

of (Organisation),

Do hereby solemnly declare and affirm the following;

- a) I hold the position of _____, and am duly authorised by the aforementioned organisation to lawfully proclaim the following and, after having made due inquiry believe the following to be completely accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- b) Neither the Respondent nor the Respondent's Agents or Servants have entered into any contract or agreement to offer payment of any kind to a trade association, or representative of the Principal in the event of a winning EOI by this organisation.
- c) Neither the Respondent nor the Respondent's Agents or Servants have had any knowledge of EOI's submitted by its competitors nor did the Respondent furnish the price of the enclosed EOI to any source external to their own organisation prior to the close of the EOI date as specified within this document.
- d) Neither the Respondent nor the Respondent's Agents or Servants have entered into any contract or agreement to offer payment of any kind to an unsuccessful Respondent in the event of being accepted for a future contract of any sort with Council.
- e) The Respondent is not aware of any facts which would affect the decision of the Council in accepting this EOI, nor has the Respondent attempted to acquire information relevant to the EOI process by soliciting the Principal, the Superintendent or their Representative's Agents or Servants.
- f) Neither the Respondent nor the Respondent's Agents or Servants have entered into any agreement with other respondents or third party which results in a payment of unsuccessful Respondent's fees.
- g) The contents of this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and in no way have been written under duress of any form.

I make this solemn declaration as to the matter aforesaid, according to the law in this behalf made, and subject to the punishment by law provided for any wilfully false statement in any such declaration.

Signature of Respondent:

Subscribed and declared at:

This:**Day of****(Year)**.....

Before me.....**(Print name)**

Witness.....**(Signature)**

(Justice of the Peace or authorised person)

Proposed contract

The most appropriate contract or agreement shall be determined through the Competitive Dialogue process and made available during the final selective tender process.

Further Information

The EOI Manager is Mr Greg Lawrence – Service Leader Economic Development and Marketing.

Email: glawrence@armidale.nsw.gov.au

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