



December 18, 2020

Captain Edgar Ashton Bodden
Chairman, Development Control Board
Government Administration Building
PO Box 240
Cayman Brac, KY2-2101

Mr. Haroon Pandohie
Director of Planning
Central Planning Authority
PO Box 113
Grand Cayman, KY1-9000

RE: Proposed Air Base - Daggaro (Cayman)

Dear Mr. Bodden and Mr. Pandohie,

I write with great concern over the recent reports that the Cayman Brac and Little Cayman Development Control Board has approved a proposed air base for a Swiss aviation company (Daggaro) which plans to operate Military/Para-Military Blackhawk and/or Blackhawk variant utility helicopters out of Captain Charles Kirkconnell Airport at the West End of Cayman Brac.

For the last 50 years, stayover tourism has been the main driver of the economy of the Sister Islands. Our family has been the primary force behind this development over the last 40 years. My grandfather built the original Brac Reef Resort (which he later sold) and then the Brac Reef Beach Resort, which we now call Cayman Brac Beach Resort which opened more than 35 years ago. My father built the Little Cayman Beach Resort which opened 27 years ago. These resorts are more than businesses for our family as we aim to steward our family's legacy for future generations.

We have plans to further invest in and expand both of our resorts, Cayman Brac Beach Resort and Little Cayman Beach Resort. As the largest resorts on both of the Sister Islands, they are a key driver of the local economy. We have plans to build additional oceanfront accommodations in the coming years, but like all tourism businesses in the Cayman Islands are struggling due to the closure of our borders. *This project could be a fatal blow to the future of our business and tourism in the Sister Islands.*



We believe the peace and tranquility of Cayman Brac is the primary draw for travelers seeking remote and simple places of natural beauty. As such, my family is extremely concerned that the operation of military-type helicopters around the Sister Islands from the Daggaro airbase will impact the travelers and investors in Sister Islands greatly if permitted to move forward. We will take every measure to oppose this project as we do not see any way that it will not permanently impact our business and the quality of life for all Cayman Brackers.

It's our understanding that when proposals as significant as this are laid out, the community is engaged by the relevant parties so that a productive dialogue may ensue and concerns may be expressed. We feel that this engagement is even more critical in a community as small and tight knit as Cayman Brac.

At this time, we have not been provided a detailed understanding of the proposal other than what is in local news reports nor have we been consulted by the Cayman Islands Government. Our greatest concern is noise pollution and other environmental impacts around the Resort "zone" at the West End as follows:

- **Increase in Noise Pollution**
 - Cayman Brac Beach Resort is already impacted by the noise pollution from Saab and 737 aircraft. These planes are loud on takeoff and landing given their power, size and the Resort proximity to the runway. The audible jet wash from these early morning flights reverberates throughout Cayman Brac Beach Resort and other West End properties in early morning hours.
 - Currently the Cayman Islands Airport Authority at Charles Kirkconnell Airport operates bird 'scare' cannons which are sounded on a regular interval when birds are present.
 - The addition of Military/Para-Military level aircraft will add significantly more noise to the local environment at the West End of Cayman Brac. It is our understanding that a Blackhawk Helicopter is as loud or louder than a 737 size jet.

- **Non-Commercial/Military Air Traffic Increase**
 - The skies above will have Military type of aircraft in regular flight paths around and above the Resort 'zone'. This will undoubtedly detract from the peace and serenity our guests seek and will significantly impact the guest experience leading to declining revenues for our business.

- **Environmental Impacts**
 - The National Conservation Council has expressed concerns to the DCB through the CI Department of Environment about the proposed air base including but not limited to threats to the endangered Sister Islands Rock Iguana, the many native species, including slow growing trees at the location and an unusual cultural feature in the area which includes the West End Turtle Kraal and Nurse Smith Cave.



We respectfully request that we are consulted as part of any current and future discussions relating to the Daggaro airbase proposal. Our family's multi-generational investment in the Islands dating back to some of the very first inhabitants will be severely impacted and more importantly the quality of life for all Cayman Brackers will decrease.

We trust that we will hear from you in due course.

Respectfully,

Michael Tibbetts
Managing Director
Cayman Brac Beach Resort
Clearly Cayman Resorts
michael.tibbetts@clearlycayman.com

cc: The National Conservation Council of the Cayman Islands
cc: The National Trust of the Cayman Islands
cc: Ms. Gina Ebanks-Petrie Director of the Department of the Environment of the Cayman Islands