MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO until 1201am Thursday 12 November

Builder of Christchurch's One New Zealand Stadium Joins Team to Test Canberra City Stadium

Canberra Airport has today announced that leading construction company BESIX Watpac has joined the team testing the proposed Canberra City All Event Stadium, working alongside global stadium architects Populous to determine how the stadium could be built and what it would cost.

BESIX Watpac has been engaged under an early contractor involvement arrangement. Bringing a builder in at concept stage means the designs being developed for Regatta Place are tested for constructability, sequencing and cost from the outset, rather than after the design is complete.

The appointment brings together the team behind One New Zealand Stadium at Te Kaha in Christchurch. Designed by Populous and built by BESIX Watpac, the fully roofed, city-centre venue opened in 2026 and has been the key reference point for the Canberra concept.

With more than a century of heritage in Australia, BESIX Watpac has delivered more than 1,200 projects since 1983, including around 60 stadium and venue facilities with a combined capacity of approximately 250,000 seats. Its stadium work includes Suncorp Stadium and the Gabba in Brisbane, Queensland Country Bank Stadium in Townsville and Cbus Super Stadium on the Gold Coast.

BESIX Watpac is part of the international BESIX Group, whose stadium portfolio includes Al Janoub Stadium, a 2022 FIFA World Cup venue in Qatar, and Aramco Stadium in Saudi Arabia.

Stephen Byron, Canberra Airport Chief Executive Officer quote

Canberra Airport Chief Executive Officer Stephen Byron said bringing the builder of One New Zealand Stadium to the table was a critical step in testing the proposal.

"We said from day one that this proposal would be evidence-led and tested rigorously. That means putting it in front of the people who actually build the best stadiums in the world."

"BESIX Watpac built the stadium in Christchurch that has shaped our thinking from the start, we will, with the team appointed, however be developing a Canberra solution fit for our climate, the site and our city's needs. Having the builder and the architect of that venue working together on a Canberra proposal gives us real-world experience of what works, what it costs and how it can best be delivered."

"Our goal is to give government and the community a proposal they can judge on credible, tested numbers, not estimates. Involving an expert in building stadia this early in the process is an important piece in how we get there."

BESIX Watpac has been engaged to:

- Co-lead concept design development and alternative options with Populous
- Develop construction methodology, sequencing and a high-level program
- Prepare a preliminary cost plan, supported by a quantity surveyor
- Lead constructability, value engineering, and risk and opportunity workshops
- Coordinate specialist structural, civil, building services and pitch advice

Mark Baker, BESIX Watpac Chief Executive Officer quote

"Our experience delivering stadiums across Australia and around the world has shown us what a venue like this can do for a community."

"We understand that every region and every stadium project is unique. Canberra's design will be tailored to the site, drawing on proven expertise to create a solution that's right for this city.

"We're looking forward to working with Populous and Canberra Airport as the proposal progresses, with a strong focus on creating opportunities for local businesses, local trades and local jobs."

Next steps

The concept design and costing work will be completed over the coming months and will run alongside the preliminary strategic impact assessment, which examines the economic and social benefits of a city-centre stadium.

Canberrans can follow Our City. Our Stadium. on Facebook and Instagram at @OurStadiumCanberra.

ENDS

RSVP and media enquiries:

Melissa Evans, Head of Marketing and Communication, Canberra Airport:
0455 227 711 or media@canberraairport.com.au