

**The Village Building Co. Limited**

Argyle Corner, Unit 7, 92 Hoskins Street, Mitchell, ACT 2911 • PO Box 178 Mitchell, ACT 2911

**Phone** (02) 6241 7419 **Fax** (02) 6241 8499

**Email** bwinnel@villagebuilding.com.au **Web** www.villagebuilding.com.au

**Regional Offices** Brisbane, Wollongong, Canberra, Coffs Harbour • ACN 056 509 025

The Office of the Chief Executive



**PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

**Q&A with Mr Bob Winnel on N.S.W Planning’s decision to “green light” the public consultation for the South Tralee development.**

**11 November 2009**

*Queanbeyan City Council has announced that the Director General of N.S.W Planning has given Queanbeyan City Council the green light to proceed with the public consultation process for the South Tralee development.*

*The Village Building Company leads the consortium that proposes to develop South Tralee.*

*In this Question and Answer, VBC’s CEO Bob Winnel (BW) outlines his views on the decision.*

**Q: Mr Winnel, first of all your response please to the announcement made by the Mayor of Queanbeyan City Council that the N.S.W Department of Planning have issued a section 65 certificate for South Tralee?**

**BW:** It is an important next step in the process of having the South Tralee rezoned for residential and associated uses. It’s a significant step because what it means is the N.S.W Minister for Planning and the N.S.W Department of Planning who have ultimate carriage of the final decision have both taken a thorough look at what is proposed and they are comfortable in moving the rezoning process to the next stage.

From VBC’s point of view, we’re delighted that Council can now take the next step in the process towards developing a great community in South Tralee. Council has amended their plans for the area so that no house will be under an existing or future flight path. The Council has followed the complex rezoning process to the letter and while it’s fair to say that the delays have been frustrating we can see the end in sight now which is great for Queanbeyan and Jerrabomberra but more particularly its great for local people who are looking to buy their first home.

**Q: So what happens from here?**

**BW:** The process is that the Draft Local environmental Plan and the Local Environment Studies for the area will go on public exhibition for at least four weeks. QCC will then consider any feedback from the public, prepare a final report, and vote on it at a Council meeting before sending a final recommendation back to the N.S.W Minister for Planning and her Department for final approval.

**Q: How long will that take?**

**BW:** We're not exactly sure but we will rigorously follow the processes outlined by the Department of Planning and Council. Now that Council has the green light we hope that the processes won't take too long.

**Q: In your first answer you referred to “no house at South Tralee being under a current or proposed flight path”. This has been a point of contention. Are you confident that the matter is settled?**

**BW:** You would hope so. Leaving aside whether or not you believe that a regional airport such as Canberra with a single runway is able to attract and manage an aircraft taking off or landing every two minutes of each day and night of the year ... (which is simply nonsense .... it would make it busier than Sydney Airport), we accepted that Council had to adjust its plans to meet the larger noise footprint this traffic estimate would create. In Council's new plan, **no house in South Tralee is under a current or proposed flight path**. I would hope that would end the criticism and conjecture. The development at South Tralee as proposed by Queanbeyan City Council complies with all the relevant planning regulations and stringent aircraft noise standards and allows for Canberra Airport to grow larger than Sydney Airport. The fact is that the noise profile at South Tralee is less than Double Bay in Sydney.

**Q: Will the approval have any impact on Canberra Airport's plans to create a 24 hour freight hub?**

**BW:** No. What Council has done is to accept the ultimate capacity of the airport as outlined in their Master plan and adjusted its plans to to comply with the noise standards. The development of South Tralee will have no impact whatsoever on the current or future operation of Canberra Airport.

**Q: So are you saying you now expect the process will be allowed to continue without any challenge from Canberra Airport?**

**BW:** What I'm saying is that the development as proposed by Queanbeyan City Council complies with all the necessary planning regulations and has taken into account the future demands of the airport. No house at South Tralee is under a current or proposed flight path so that's no longer an issue. I think any fair minded person would say, "Okay, they've adjusted their plans, no houses are now under the flight path so they should be free to get on with it" but I can't speak for Canberra Airport. If they make criticism or comment, they will have to be responsible for that criticism but equally they shouldn't be allowed to make statements that are not true.

**Q: What about noise sharing? Canberra Airport says by building houses under flight paths such as at South Tralee you increase the risk of noise sharing?**

**BW:** Well the first and most obvious thing to say is that Queanbeyan City Council's plans for South Tralee totally comply with the standards that Commonwealth policy states are designed to protect the long term viability of airports. The second thing is that the Federal Government is on the record as saying no to noise sharing. AirServices Australia policy states quite specifically that they won't consider noise sharing under the conditions that prevail at South Tralee. Noise sharing is a ruse aimed to stir a negative reaction. The development of housing at South Tralee will not lead to noise sharing in Canberra. People who buy in the area will be fully aware of the location and they will make their own judgements about whether or not they want to live there.

**Q: What about just leaving the development of housing to Googong as has been argued by Canberra Airport. Why isn't that an option?**

**BW:** Googong is a remote location that is well away from existing infrastructure. The infrastructure costs in establishing that development will be significantly more than South Jerrabomberra. Where South Tralee is located is just behind Hume. It's close to the major arterial roads, close to Jerrabomberra, close to Queanbeyan and close to Civic. Close proximity to infrastructure will make it more attractive to purchasers and will facilitate the construction of more affordable housing. We support Googong going ahead, don't get me wrong, but it would seem that South Tralee is the next most obvious place to develop and given that we comply with all the regulations, we should be allowed to get on with it.

**Q: We've seen stories this week about a looming lack of affordable housing in Canberra and Queanbeyan and people being forced to live in Goulburn and Yass and commute to Canberra. What role do you see for South Tralee in helping alleviate this problem?**

**BW:** We commissioned one of Australia's leading economic modellers BIS Shrapnel to take a look at this very issue and it's fair to say that the risks to sustained housing affordability in the southern part of Canberra and Queanbeyan are substantial if the development of South Jerrabomberra doesn't proceed. Now what we are talking about here is development at South Tralee which is just one part of the overall development planned for South Jerrabomberra. But in South Tralee alone we're looking at between 1000-1500 homes, a large number of which will be affordable. Land in the north of Canberra is running out and the next most obvious development front for Canberra and Queanbeyan is South Jerrabomberra. Our development will give people the opportunity to live close to the Canberra and Queanbeyan CBD's at an affordable price. We're confident demand will be strong.

**Q: What will the development at South Tralee contain?**

**BW:** It will contain Queanbeyan's first non government secondary college, a Primary school, a multi-purpose community hall, sports grounds, a park and ride facility, tennis courts, local parks and open space. There will also be between 1000 and 1500 homes, a town centre with retail and other mixed use. We'll be applying the highest standards in design, environmental engineering and technology throughout the whole of the development and create a wonderful community in which to live. For example we'll be implementing irrigation systems that make the best use of grey water. The other issue is the location. It really is close to the Canberra and Queanbeyan CBD's and not far from either Woden or Tuggeranong. It's a place that has a lot going for it.

**Q: You must be pleased with the support you have received from Queanbeyan City Council, the Queanbeyan Business Council, the Jerrabomberra Resident's Association and both the N.S.W State and Federal local members for the local area?**

**BW:** We are pleased to have their support and indeed the support of the whole community in Queanbeyan and Jerrabomberra. This is the development that will allow Queanbeyan and Jerrabomberra to grow and to reach its potential. It will deliver much need facilities to the community and create a place to live for people who are looking to buy an affordable home. The people and organisations know that what we are proposing will be good for the region. The development complies with all the necessary planning regulations and its now time to get on with it.

**For media inquiries please contact David Pembroke on 0416 103 229 or (02) 6273 0232**