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CABINET NOTE

CN MUDP 06/027

TO: THE PREMIER FOR CABINET TO NOTE

RE: BUCKLAND PARK COUNTRY TOWNSHIP –MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1. For Cabinet to note that I intend to grant Major Development status to the Buckland Park Country Township proposal.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Housing and Development Industry has been making representations to my office that the supply of land suitable for urban development within the Urban Boundary is rapidly diminishing. While there is probably of the order of 10 years supply of residential land still remaining, large development companies are searching for larger tracks of land for development to ensure continuity of business.
- 2.2. Buckland Park has been a site of interest to various developers for many years. The site is located approximately four kilometres west of the existing township of Virginia and is fringed by the Gawler River to the north and Legoe Road to the south and the mangrove coast to the west. A map of the subject land is included as **Attachment 1**.
- 2.3. Buckland Park has been the subject of a previous Major development proposal.
- 2.3.1. In December 2002 a land division proposal was lodged on behalf of Vosporos Pty Ltd to create 440 rural living allotments (approx 4000 square metres each) on land then zoned for Rural Living purposes at Buckland Park.
- 2.3.2. The then Minister for Urban Development and Planning determined that there were major issues of economic social and environmental importance associated with that proposal and, after consulting with the proponent, declared it to be a Major Development by Gazette Notice dated 5 June 2003.
- 2.3.3. Given the previous proposal was limited in its scope and did not address a number of critical issues, an 'early no' for that proposal was issued by the Governor pursuant to Section 48(2)(a) of the *Development Act 1993*.
- 2.3.4. A Council initiated Plan Amendment Report on Buckland Park was introduced with interim effect by the Governor on 12 June 2003. This removed the previous 'Rural Living' zoning for the subject land and replaced it with 'Horticulture West' zoning.
- 2.4. Recently, Mr Stephen Holmes, Director, Connor Holmes wrote to me on behalf of Vosporos Pty Ltd seeking support for a new proposal to develop a country township on 670 hectares of land to the west of Port Wakefield Road at Buckland Park.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The most recent proposal comprises the development of approximately 5000 residential allotments and a comprehensive town centre with retail and commercial services, a medical centre, community facilities, a R-12 (private) school, and sport and recreation facilities. These facilities would vastly expand the depleted range of services and facilities currently available to the existing community of Two Wells / Virginia.
- 3.2. The proposal allows for the provision of a strip of land to enable the provision for a future transport corridor such as a spur line to connect to the existing standard gauge line should the need arise one day.
- 3.3. It also proposes to preserve all existing significant trees and furthermore seeks in addition to usual open space provision to create a large linear reserve to retain and protect the native vegetation along the Gawler River.
- 3.4. The proposal seeks to incorporate the following measures in relation to the efficient management of water:
 - Ample use of Wetlands systems;
 - Intermittent creek systems;
 - Integration of the proposal with the Gawler River management and flood mitigation works;
 - Aquifer recharge;
 - Utilisation of treated water from the Bolivar pipeline (which runs through the subject land);
 - Irrigation, revegetation and greening;
 - Water based recreation.
- 3.5. Furthermore, the proposal seeks to include the following measures in relation to climate change and the environment:
 - Sustainable energy practices through passive building design;
 - The use of solar and micro turbine wind power
 - Dual water supply systems (similar to that used at the Mawson Lakes development):
 - Reuse of grey water for irrigation purposes
 - Recharge of the aquifer through water harvesting.
 - Recharge of the bolivar pipeline (runs through the site)
 - Extensive tree planting and environmental restoration, including the establishment of urban forests
 - Re-establishment of wildlife habitat
 - Protection of existing woodlands
 - Alternative access options within and beyond the site, for example, walking and bicycle paths within the site.
- 3.6. The proposal is consistent with the South Australian Housing Plan in that the proponent has confirmed that 10% of housing allotments (dispersed throughout the development) will be affordable (consistent with Homestart eligibility criteria), and a further 5% will be earmarked for high needs housing. This will be a major opportunity to ensure compliance with the State's Housing Plan resulting in 750 affordable and high needs homes.

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1. The proposal clearly meets the primary criteria for declaration as a Major Development pursuant to the Section 46 of the *Development Act 1993* in that in my opinion it is of major economic, social and environmental significance.
- 4.2. A secondary test pursuant to Section 46 of the Development Act 1993 is whether or not the declaration is appropriate for the proper assessment of the proposal. It is my opinion that this proposal has a reasonable prospect for success and that such a declaration will enable the proponent to demonstrate in detail how they propose to address all economic, social and environmental issues in relation to the proposal.
- 4.3. The Development Assessment Commission (DAC) will be required pursuant to the *Development Act 1993* to determine the guidelines that will need to be addressed as part of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Public Environmental Report (PER) or Development Report (DR). The type of report the proponent is required to prepare will be determined by DAC pursuant to the *Development Act 1993*.
- 4.4. Some of the issues I would envisage will be required to addressed through the report process include:
 - 4.4.1. Urban Boundary – The subject site is at present located outside of the Urban Boundary. It is however located a convenient distance from the Urban Boundary to enable appropriate green belt separation, preservation of key horticultural precincts and the formation of a genuine master planned Township. The site will provide urgently needed housing in relatively close proximity to Adelaide’s northern industrial areas such as Edinburgh Parks. The site’s location will also make good use of existing and proposed physical infrastructure such as the Port Wakefield Road’s dual carriageway and the proposed Gawler River flood mitigation works to the east.
 - 4.4.2. Horticulture development- The proposal is in close proximity to the Virginia region which is an important area for horticultural production. The proposed development seeks to utilise low grade agricultural production land which in the past has the subjected to flooding and total crop losses. Most of the land is at present under utilised due to its high salt content and the soil’s hard structure.
 - 4.4.3. Flooding – As mentioned above, the site has in the past been subject to flooding. The Office for Infrastructure Development (OFID) has advised that stormwater modelling work on the Gawler River Catchments, which reflects the position after the construction of the flood control dams above Gawler, has now been completed.

OFID advises the modelling shows some areas of inundation in the Buckland Park area even after the dams are built, but importantly, it also shows that there will be significant areas of land that will be developable from a stormwater management perspective. It shows that some land will not be inundated in a 100 year event at current levels and other land can be cut and filled and made suitable for a 100 years event.

OFID has indicated the modelling data will be made available to the proponents of the project and can be used for development/refinement of their plans and feasibility analysis.

OFID concurs with my view that a 'major development' declaration provides an appropriate vehicle for the project to be documented and environmental and planning issues (including flood management considerations) to be properly assessed.

- 4.4.4. Public health – The site is more than 3 kilometres from extensive areas of mangroves which would contain mosquito populations. Although the proposal is a considerable distance from the mangroves, an assessment will be required to ascertain whether this will be a risk to public health and how best any identified risk can be managed.
- 4.4.5. Compatibility with existing uses – An organic composting facility is located more than 2 kilometres to the South of the subject site. Although there is a considerable distance from such a use, appropriate buffer areas will be required to be established to ensure potential adverse impacts from all nearby existing uses are adequately managed. An assessment will be required to ascertain the necessary extent of any such buffers.
- 4.4.6. Infrastructure – The site's location will also make good use of existing and proposed physical infrastructure such as the Port Wakefield Road's dual carriageway and the proposed Gawler River flood mitigation works to the east. There is no social infrastructure on this vacant site at present; however the scale of the development should provide the required critical mass to enable the introduction of economically sustainable provision of social infrastructure.
- 4.4.7. Infrastructure provision – The proponent has confirmed that all physical and social infrastructures in relation to this proposal will be provided at the proponent's expense or initiative.
- 4.4.8. Project Completion Guarantee – Given the proponent is intending to provide all infrastructure for the proposal over a number of stages, it is important that the proponent demonstrate a business plan that corresponds to Stage roll-out. Ordinarily, this would not be required, but the effects of this project failing halfway through development would have many implications for any residents established in the development and also possibly significant financial consequences for Government and local government if they had to make good incomplete or absent infrastructure and services.
- 4.5. This proposal is a serious proposal that is consistent with the South Australian Strategic Plan in that:
 - 4.5.1. It will contribute positively to the State's Economic growth (Target T1.5). The proposal will contribute between \$1 billion - \$2 billion in terms of economic activity over a number of years.
 - 4.5.2. It will enable the comprehensive development of a master planned community that will provide important housing (including affordable and high needs housing), north of Adelaide to compliment business investment in Northern Adelaide. It is also compatible with the State's population growth target and it contributes to housing stock for a growing population. (Targets T1.6, T1.7, T6.6, T6.7).
 - 4.5.3. Importantly, it will also provide much needed housing to accommodate army personnel in the soon to be relocated army battalion.

4.5.4. Although it expands the physical footprint of human settlement, it does so in a location best placed to take advantage of recent and proposed strategic infrastructure in the north of Adelaide and Gawler (Target T1.16). Furthermore, it enables a large scale development to showcase environmentally sustainable urban design which includes water sensitive urban design (Target T3.10).

4.5.5. The proposal also incorporates an important tract of land to enable its future conversion to a transport corridor (spur line) linking into the Standard Gauge railway line which will connect back to Edinburgh Parks and Adelaide (Targets T3.9 and T3.10).

4.6. While there are some challenges for the proponent in addressing the issues identified, I am of the view that it is important to clearly demonstrate to the housing and development industry that the Government is open minded and prepared to consider innovative solutions for future development.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet Notes the briefing and the intention of the Minister for Urban Development and Planning to declare the Buckland Park proposal a Major development pursuant to Section 46 of the *Development Act 1993*.

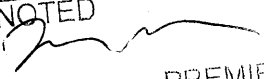


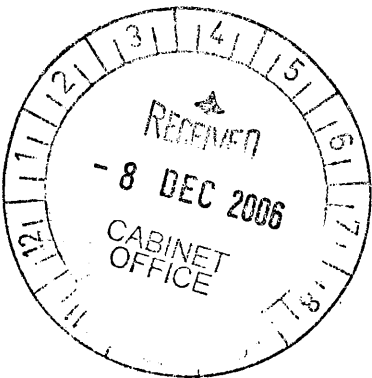
Paul Holloway
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Police
Minister for Mineral Resources Development
Minister for Urban Development and Planning

Date: 8/12/2006









In Cabinet

11 DEC 2006

NOTED

PREMIER





-  Country Township (300 - 800m²)
-  Recreation Area
-  Tree Protection
-  Collector Road Connections
-  Tree lined Boulevard
-  Overland Flow paths
-  Town Centre
-  Site Boundary

**BUCKLAND PARK
COUNTRY TOWNSHIP
STRUCTURE PLAN
(PRELIMINARY)**