

23 August 2007

MEDIA RELEASE



PUBLIC URGED TO JUDGE SMITHS POINT PROJECT ON ITS MERITS

After many years of extensive community consultation and detailed planning, the proposed Smiths Point tourist and residential village at Smiths Beach near Yallingup has been advertised for public comment.

Chairman of Canal Rocks Pty Ltd, David McKenzie welcomed the release of the Development Guide Plan by the Shire of Busselton for a 60-day public comment period, urging the community to judge the project on its merits, not on the controversy surrounding the past involvement of lobbyists and the subsequent CCC investigation.

"We've worked with the local community to ensure Smiths Point exceeds expectations for the environmental, social and economic benefits it will bring to the area," Mr McKenzie said.

"Now it is time for everyone to have a close look at the plan and make a submission to the Shire of Busselton. We urge those who like what they see to support the project."

Since Smiths Beach was designated one of four Tourist Nodes in 1998 (under the State Government's Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge Statement of Planning Policy), the site has been earmarked for a sustainable tourist and residential village. The other Tourist Nodes are Bunker Bay, Yallingup and Hamelin Bay.

Situated low on the hill and set back from the beach, the new Smiths Point village will be dominated by the backdrop of the national park and planned conservation areas to the west.

Of the 40ha available for development, almost 19ha will be used for public spaces and reserves, supporting the area's environment and providing buffer zones to the national park while the western headland of the site remains in its natural state.

The land area to be developed for Smiths Point (totaling 21ha) is approximately 55% of that occupied by Yallingup (built area – approx. 38ha). Once fully developed, the Smiths Beach village will be significantly smaller than the settlements at Gracetown and Prevelly-Gnarabup.

In accordance with the State Government policy, 70% of Smiths Point will be dedicated to tourist accommodation and 30% to residential development.

Once complete, Smiths Point will have 272 tourist accommodation units and 104 residential homes. There will be a variety of short stay accommodation options, including camping and backpacker facilities, accessible by all visitors to the area irrespective of their budget.

The plan also includes a café, restaurant and hotel facilities as well as a multi-purpose surf club and community centre, helping to create a vibrant village atmosphere.

"The environment is our best asset and we have worked extremely hard to ensure Smiths Point is well within local and State government guidelines for height, dwelling density and visual amenity and to ensure that it exceeds community expectations for environmental management and community facilities."

Mr McKenzie said it was critical that the project's many supporters make a written submission to the Shire of Busselton during the advertising period.

"As chairman of Canal Rocks Pty Ltd I have put my heart and soul into making sure Smiths Point becomes the best example of sustainable living on the Western Australian coast," Mr McKenzie said.

"We have done everything we can to ensure the community's needs and expectations for this beautiful site are realised.

"The benefits of Smiths Point will be felt across the whole South West community for years to come and I know those who are cautious about its development today will be supporters in the future once they see the vision become a reality."

In addition to the substantial environmental, community and economic benefits the project would bring to the South West (see details below), Mr McKenzie said other key points to consider when making a submission include:

- The easy walking, relaxed atmosphere will ensure Smiths Point is in keeping with the South West's unique character;
- In response to community feedback, the proposed height and density of buildings at Smiths Point will be well below the Shire of Busselton's regulations for the area, and those of the existing settlement at Smiths Beach;
- The average density for South West tourist developments is R30. The tourist aspects at Smiths Point are proposed at R16, well below the norm for the area and tourist developments in general. The existing development at Smiths Beach is R40 to R60;
- The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure set a maximum density of R25 for the residential components, but Smiths Point has been designed at densities of less than R20 in order to further ensure Smiths Point is in harmony with its unique environment and the character of other settlements along the Cape to Cape coastline; and
- Building materials will be carefully chosen and colours drawn from a natural palette. Materials such as stone, timber, iron and rammed earth will help ensure the development is in keeping with the landscape.

Those wishing to make a submission during the advertising period should write to:

Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Busselton, Locked Bag No 1, BUSSELTON WA 6280

For more information contact 1300 306 475 or visit www.smithspoint.com.au.

Ends

Media: Please contact Tim Larcombe at Linc on 6363 7000 or 0403 819 781.

SMITHS POINT - KEY BENEFITS



Environmental

- The preservation of the area's spectacular views to, and from, agreed key points across the site including the natural amphitheatre ridgeline, Canal Rocks and the Torpedo Rocks car park;
- Of the 40ha available for development, almost 19ha will be used for public spaces and reserves, creating large buffer zones to the National Park while ensuring the western headland of the site remains in its natural state;
- This includes the creation of a Community Endowment Reserve (Principal Ridge Protection Area) and adjacent bushland totalling more than 15ha;
- Conservation areas will be donated to the community and will be managed initially by the developer in line with statutory requirements;
- Improved management of vegetation on the western side of the site;
- Delivery of secure water and deep sewerage supplies to the area;
- Installation of deep sewerage will enable other users in the area currently using on-site treatment of effluent, such as septic tanks, to convert to sewerage and reduce the risk of excess nutrients entering groundwater and nearby waterways; and
- The development will reduce pressure on other, less developed areas along the Cape-to-Cape coastline;

Smiths Point will have the following additional positive environmental outcomes through best practice vegetation management:

- The most significant vegetation on the site, ie. the western granite heathlands and Rottneest Island Tea Tree vegetation will be retained and managed for its conservation values;
- Other native vegetation will be retained wherever possible within private lots with conservation covenants to restrict clearing of trees;
- Road and access ways will be designed in a low-key way that enables more vegetation to be retained within the development than would normally be possible with a more conventional road system;
- The National Park will be protected by a fringing road between the development and the park as well as a buffer strip of large lots with a large amount of tree retention;
- Habitat for possums will be retained on site by the retention of Peppermint trees in lots and road reserves and the planting of additional peppermint trees in landscaped areas;
- Habitat will be further protected by the introduction of a Cat Local Law to prohibit the keeping of cats on the land;
- Stormwater from the road system will be collected and infiltrated back into the subsoil; and
- A coastal foreshore reserve will be extended and managed for conservation purposes on the western side and for recreational purposes on the northern side adjacent to Smiths Beach.

Community

- Visitors to Smiths Point will be offered a selection of tourist accommodation options to suit any budget, including hotel, hostel, chalet, backpackers and camping;
- A 200sqm community centre with provisions for a surf life saving club with surf and beach patrols to improve safety for all beach users;



SMITHS POINT - KEY BENEFITS (continued)

Community

- Recreation facilities, including play equipment, seating and barbeque facilities;
- Café, restaurant and hotel facilities will help create a vibrant local village atmosphere;
- Improved road access and parking along the beach front, including new parking bays, viewing areas, lighting and landscape improvements;
- A network of footpaths established throughout the development to encourage pedestrian activity;
- Main vehicle access to the village will be from a new principal entry road in the southeast corner of the site, minimising additional traffic flow on the existing foreshore road;
- A blanket 40km/h limit for all local streets to ensure community safety;
- Upgrades to the Cape to Cape Trail; and
- The developers will contribute to local FESA facilities.

Economic

- The 12-year construction phase will inject an estimated \$330 million into the regional economy;
- As a resort destination and residential hub, Smiths Point will potentially inject as much as \$27 million per year into the regional economy once complete;
- The flow-on effect will benefit the community to the tune of \$70 million per annum once the site is fully developed;
- It's anticipated that the project will create 160 direct jobs once fully developed, with an estimated 175 more indirect jobs for the local economy;
- The plan also commits to a tourism campaign for the region and the locality, which will promote local activities, attracting visitors and tourist revenue to the area;
- 70% of the development will be dedicated to tourist accommodation which will include a resort hotel, lodge and backpackers accommodation;
- Smiths Point's conservation areas will be managed privately, and therefore will not be a burden on the public purse;
- Community infrastructure (community facilities, surf club, recreational facilities, etc) will be provided by the developer at no cost to ratepayers;
- Additional rates generated by Smiths Point will be a windfall for the Busselton Shire, creating funds for improved services in the area;
- State government will also benefit from additional taxes, charges and rates revenue, enabling investment in better services for the community;
- Residential land opportunities will ensure a greater number of people have access to living options along this beautiful stretch of coastline.

For more detail on the benefits of Smiths Point to the area and the South West region please visit www.smithspoint.com.au.
