



SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

DEVELOPMENT OF OFF-BASE HOUSING FOR DEFENCE AT QUEANBEYAN, NSW

August 2003

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A Initial Site Investigation Report – August 2003 (provided under separate cover)

Cultural Heritage Assessment report Environmental Phase 1 Assessment Report Ecological Assessment Report Traffic Impact Assessment Report Letter from Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation

IDENTIFICATION OF THE NEED

1 OBJECTIVES

1.1 In this submission, the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) seeks approval from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) to proceed with a major residential development at Queanbeyan, NSW.

1.2 The project objective is to provide 40 modern off-base residences with the first house to be available for occupation in November 2004, to meet the operational needs of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the requirements of the Department of Defence. There are already 9 existing DHA townhouses on the site bringing the total number of dwellings after completion to 49. In addition to the dwellings, the existing golf clubhouse and associated car park is to be made available for sale as a child care center.

2 THE NEED

2.1 The proposed development will serve various Defence establishments in the ACT region.

2.2 The most recent review of the Defence Housing Forecast (DHF) for the ACT anticipates growth in the Defence housing requirement from 1522 to 1858 over the next three years as indicated in the Table below.

	03-04	04-05	05-06
TOTAL DEFENCE REQUIREMENT	1522	1522	1858
NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM (TOTAL)	115	120	236

Table 1: DHA Residential Requirements for the ACT

2.3 The significant growth in the requirement for the region in FY 05-06 (336 houses or a 22% increase compared with current requirements) reflects the intended transfer of the Defence Headquarters Australian Strategic Theatre to Bungendore, and all options for meeting this increased requirement are being explored.

2.4 As at 1 July 2003, DHA had under management 1425 properties, which is approximately 77% of the forecast requirement. As well, more than 170 current leases will expire over the next two years.. Then and now, any shortfall is met by requiring service members to seek housing from the general market and providing them with Rental Assistance, which is not cost effective or efficient either for Defence or the members.

2.4 It is vital for cost effective, flexible provisioning both that the proportion of DHA-managed stock to Rental Allowance provisioning be increased, and that additional owned stock be acquired. The addition of a further 40 modern residences will be an important contribution to meeting the current and ongoing requirements.

2.5 DHA's Capital Program covering FY 2001/02 to 2003/04 notes that taking into account the Defence housing requirement, the Authority's Corporate Plan, the national and regional marketing analyses, the stock situation and the broad consideration of provisioning options, a significant construction program should be undertaken in the ACT region.

3 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 DHA satisfies Defence accommodation requirements by a mixture of delivery methods:

- (a) construction off-base with a view to retaining the properties or selling them with a lease attached;
- (b) construction on-base to accord with Defence operational or policy requirements and/or if such construction is the most cost-effective for all concerned;
- (c) direct purchase with a view to retaining the properties or selling them with a lease attached; and
- (d) direct leases from the private rental market.

3.2 In locations where there is a high level of Defence demand, constructed housing delivered through bulk procurement contracts is the most effective provisioning option because plans can be geared to Defence requirements.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The project involves developing a site zoned as residential but previously used as a Pitch & Putt business in Queanbeyan. The site is presently vacant.

4.2 DHA surveys undertaken with Defence personnel based in the ACT region have shown a clear preference for detached dwellings, with townhouses being their second choice and apartments least preferred. Taking these preferences into account, planning has been based on 40 new allotments, 33 of which would be suitable for detached houses (500m² to 600m² lots) and 7 townhouse lots of 260m². The new residences will provide a range of floor plans and amenities that will be fully compliant with the current Defence and community standards.

4.3 Infrastructure works involving supply of roads, water, sewerage, storm water disposal, establishment of electricity supply and telephone services will be undertaken to current Queanbeyan City Council (QCC) Standards.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 DHA commissioned consultants to undertake an Environmental Contamination Investigation on the proposed redevelopment site. Depending on

the results, a more detailed sampling investigation may have been necessary. The consultant's report confirmed that the redevelopment site was natural bush land up until 1991 when the construction of the Pitch & Putt commenced. No previous contamination issues were identified. The report concluded it was unnecessary to undertake a further sampling program and that the site was suitable for residential development.

5.2 A flora and fauna survey of the development site was also conducted to judge whether there was any likelihood of the proposed development having any significant effect on the habitat of threatened species of flora and fauna, and to fulfill other requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* 1979 and the *Threatened Species Conservation Act* 1995.

5.3 The report considered 2 flora species, 9 fauna species and one endangered ecological community. These are listed on the NPWS Wildlife Database as occurring within a 10km radius of the redevelopment site and have potential habitat on or adjacent to the redevelopment site.

5.4 The report concluded that the proposed redevelopment would have no significant impact on flora, fauna or ecological communities. However, the redevelopment would contribute to the Key Threatening Process "Clearing of Native Vegetation" and result in increased fragmentation of local habitat through the removal or modification of a "stepping stone" resource for fauna moving through the local area.

5.5 Although the redevelopment will involve the removal of a substantial proportion of existing trees resulting in a reduction in selected local resource, it is not likely to result in the isolation or any currently interconnected or proximate area of habitat for the species considered. In addition, the redevelopment will conform to Queanbeyan City Council's TPO (Tree Preservation Order) and replace all removed trees at a 1:1 ratio.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

6 LOCATION

6.1 Queanbeyan is approximately 10 kilometers south east of the Canberra CBD. A site location map is attached (Supplementary Information, Item 1), together with an aerial view of the site (Supplementary Information, Item 2).

6.2 The site is close to schools, local services and amenities. Bus services are safely accessible by pedestrians from all proposed allotments.

7 LAND OWNERSHIP

7.1 The land was acquired by DHA in April 2003.

8 SITE DESCRIPTION

8.1 The site is identified as Lot 1 DP 706624, 20 Furlong Road, Queanbeyan NSW. The site is contained within the Queanbeyan City Council area of planning control and zoned as Residential. The Residential zoning permits housing in all forms subject to Council's consent.

8.2 McCrae Street binds the site to the east, Furlong Road to the South and the Queanbeyan Race Course to the north and west. The site is roughly triangular in shape and occupies an area of approximately 3.78 hectares. It slopes significantly from east to west to a low point located on the western boundary. It consists of a number of small man made rolling banks that surround the golf course greens and fairways.

8.3 Until 2003, the land was used for a Pitch & Putt golf course which was constructed in 1991 when the land was natural bush land. The proposed site also has 9 detached townhouses along Furlong Road and these have been leased by DHA since 1992.

9 SCOPE OF WORK

9.1 Urban design principles. The site slopes significantly from east to west to a low point located on the western boundary. Thirty-three single dwellings and seven townhouses are proposed (Supplementary Information, Items 3 and 4). These will supplement the nine townhouses already on the site. The proposed subdivision is planned to orientate lots so as to optimize views.

9.2 Roads. The development is planned around one main internal road with an entrance off Furlong Rd, and one public pathway between the end of the cull-de sac and McCrae Street. There are no 'through' roads; hence motor vehicle traffic within the area will be minimized, contributing to a safe and comfortable living environment. Streets within the development will be orientated along the contours of the land to limit the need for cut and fill, and the street layout will minimize the percentage of carriageway.

9.3 Services. Storm water drainage, communications, sewerage reticulation, and gas and electrical services are discussed in paragraph 13 below.

9.4 Amenity provision. Between the development and the Queanbeyan Race Course, a landscaped open area and buffer zone is proposed to include provision for storm water filtration and re-direction to the existing race course dam, for reuse by the race course irrigation system (see paragraph 19.1 below re cooperation with Queanbeyan Race Club. Pedestrian access and links will be provided throughout the site.

9.5 Housing types. Typical house plans have been prepared for town planning purposes and a selection is attached (Supplementary Information, Item 5) together with examples of the resultant streetscapes that could form the character of the Queanbeyan development. The new detached houses will have

four bedrooms and be a mixture of category 4B1 and 4B2. The new townhouses are to be 3B2.

9.6 Child Care Facility. In considering options for the development of the site, the potential to incorporate a child care facility by excising the existing golf clubhouse and associated car park (approximately 1900 m²) was explored and found to be viable. There has been considerable unsolicited interest from private individuals in purchasing the site, which reflects the shortage of child care facilities in the area. It is the intention to proceed to excise the site and offer it for sale for development and use as a child care facility.

10 HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 Consultants were commissioned by DHA to undertake a heritage assessment of the site to address any potential Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage issues.

10.2 Aboriginal Heritage Assessment. There are three Aboriginal community groups in the Queanbeyan/ACT area which have been recognised as having an interest in cultural heritage issues. The groups are: Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation, Ngunnawal ACT and District Indigenous Peoples Association and Ngunnawal Local Aboriginal Land Council. Representatives of each group were contacted and details of the proposed redevelopment were discussed. In addition the consultant made arrangements for representatives of each group to participate in the field survey. All groups agreed that no Aboriginal relics, sites or areas of potential archaeological sensitivity could be identified in the proposed redevelopment area.

10.3 Non-Aboriginal Heritage Assessment. The consultant used a range of documentation to assess the state of non-aboriginal heritage issues including the Australian Heritage Commission, the NSW Heritage Council and the National Trust. No historic relics, sites or features were identified in the proposed redevelopment area.

10.4 Overall Assessment. The proposed redevelopment site does not represent a focus for Aboriginal activity in the past and has been subject to major land surface disruption as a result of previous construction and landscape activities. There are also no listed heritage items present on the site and there were none in the past. Consequently the proposed redevelopment area is considered to have low heritage sensitivity and is therefore suitable for residential redevelopment.

11 ZONING AND APPROVALS

11.1 The DHA is proposing to submit all relevant development applications to the Queanbeyan City Council by the end of August 2003.

12 SITE DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 The main site development considerations apart from services (see paragraph 13 below) are access and drainage.

12.2 Access. Access to the redevelopment will be via Furlong Rd only, thus assisting in reducing traffic through the redevelopment. Furlong Rd joins McCrae St which itself joins Lanyon Drive – a major sub-arterial road. A traffic assessment report conducted by consultants who indicated that site access is a sufficient distance from nearby intersections to reduce any risk of conflict or confusion and will provide adequate sightlines for vehicles entering and exiting.

12.4 Hydrology and Drainage. To accord with QCC requirements for storm water management on development sites, post-development runoff from the site for all storm durations must be controlled so as not to exceed the predevelopment values for corresponding events. QCC preference is for storm water generated from the proposed development to be collected by a pit and pipe drainage network and treated/filtered near the western site boundary. Treated storm water is to be conveyed by a pipe to the Queanbeyan Race Course water storage dam for subsequent irrigation reuse.

13 SERVICES

13.1 Water. There is no existing reticulation within the site area of potential future use, however, the site can be supplied by a 250mm supply main in Furlong Rd and McCrae Street. ACTEW have indicated that the existing water supply network has sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development.

13.2 Electricity. Energy Australia has advised that:

- (a) the development would be served by underground reticulation connected to the existing 11kV assets in the area;
- (b) an 11kV extension to a new kiosk substation would be required for low voltage reticulation; and
- (c) the existing network would be capable of sustaining the additional load and no additional upgrades would be required.

13.3 Gas. Country Energy has a 50mm underground main running along Furlong Road and discussions with **Country Energy**, the local supplier, indicate that the existing supply network can provide adequate gas services to the proposed development.

13.4 Sewerage. There are two existing 150mm sewer lines on the site that appear to have served the previous development. The sewerage authority (ACTEW) has indicated that the existing sewer system has sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development.

13.5 Storm water. Storm water generated by buildings and hardstand areas is to be trapped and piped to the Queanbeyan Race Course which is situated on the western boundary (see paragraph 12.4 above).

13.6 Telecommunications. Telstra has indicated that it can supply necessary telecommunications to the proposed development, including all design and planning prior to construction. Should the existing capacity be less than required for the development, Telstra has advised that the required upgrades would be provided at their own cost.

14 CODES AND STANDARDS

14.1 Works carried out as part of this project will be carried out in accordance with all statutory rules and regulations including the current Building Code of Australia (BCA) and New South Wales laws.

14.2 The design will satisfy relevant Queanbeyan City Council standards and requirements with regard to road width, physical infrastructure and waste management.

15 ENERGY CONSERVATION

15.1 Energy conservation will be a prime design consideration. All houses will be required to provide optimal passive solar performance and achieve a minimum of 4-star energy rating in accordance with government policy.

16 LANDSCAPING

16.1 Basic landscaping, protection and trimming of existing trees will be included. Some additional general landscaping will be provided as contextual elements complementing the proposed 'lot' landscaping and streetscaping.

17 CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

17.1 The construction program will be contracted on a fixed price basis to selected Tenderers, who will have previously responded to an invitation to express interest.

17.2 Subject to PWC and DHA Board approval, the construction program is planned to commence in January 2004. Delivery of all completed dwellings is expected to occur by November 2004.

PROJECT PLANNING

18 PROJECT FEASIBILITY

18.1 A financial analysis confirms that overall the construction project is feasible within a budget of \$12 million (including GST). This includes construction costs, civil works, services, professional fees and contingency. It does not include the land acquired at a cost of \$3.7m. A detailed analysis is included in the Commercial in Confidence submission.

18.2 The DHA Board is satisfied that the proposed development as described in this submission is an appropriate, timely and cost effective way to partially meet the housing needs of ADF personnel and their families in the Canberra Region. Project estimates will be confirmed by competitive tender from prequalified builders.

19 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

19.1 An informal meeting was held with members of the public on 16th June 2003. At the meeting issues associated with traffic flow and a concern that motorists might use the main road through the redevelopment as a thoroughfare were raised. The development structure has been changed such that there is no longer a through road. DHA is undertaking further formal consultation in an effort to keep interested local residents informed.

19.2 Discussions have been undertaken with the President of the **Queanbeyan Race Club**, which adjoins the site to the west. The Club has no objections to the development and is working with DHA to capture stormwater runoff from the developed site to augment the water supply available to the Race Club for irrigation purposes.

20 OTHER ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED

20.1 ACTEW has been consulted on the supply of water and sewerage facilities for the development. No specific issues were raised.

20.2 The Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation, Ngunnawal ACT and District Indigenous Peoples Assocation and the Ngunnawal Local Aboriginal Land Council have been consulted on matters of aboriginal heritage and have raised no matters requiring further consideration.

20.3 Telstra has been consulted on the supply of telecommunications to the proposed development. They have advised there are no project specific issues to be addressed.

20.4 Country Energy has been consulted re the provision of gas services and the supply of electricity to the proposed development. Country Energy has advised thet there are no project specific issues to be addressed.

20.5 The **Australian Greenhouse Office** has been consulted and has confirmed that the proposed house designs comply with requirements and represent good house design. All will have a minimum 4 star energy rating.

21 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

21.1 Several meetings have already been held with **Queanbeyan City Council** officials, who have given initial support for the development. The required Development Application has been submitted for formal consideration.

22 PROJECT PLAN

22.1 Based on an aim of having progressive delivery of first new residences starting in December 2004, significant milestones needing to be achieved are shown below. No circumstances are anticipated at this time that would make the nominated target dates unachievable.

(a)	November 2003	Obtain Development Approval from the Queanbeyan City Council;
		Obtain PWC & Parliamentary approval;
(b)	December 2003	Obtain final DHA Board approval;
(c)	January 2004	Award civil works tender and begin civil works;
(d)	April 2004	Award construction contract and begin construction;
(e)	November 2004	Completion of construction.

23 PROJECT ESTIMATES

23.1 The estimated expected project cost has been determined by the DHA consultant quantity surveyor (the Rawlinsons Group Pty Ltd). It is based on the preliminary town planning concept of 33 detached houses and 7 townhouses.

23.2 Project estimates are based on delivery via competitive lump sum tender by suitably experienced and structured developers from the domestic sector of the local construction industry. The estimated cost of the proposal is \$12 million (incl. GST). This includes construction costs, civil works, head works charges, contingency and professional fees. A breakdown of cost will be provided separately to the Committee as Commercial-in-Confidence material.

23.3 The primary risk to the project concerns the obtaining of the required Development Approval from the Queanbeyan City Council. As indicated in paragraphs 19.1 and 21.1 above, DHA is liaising with Council in an effort to ensure planning and associated issues are appropriately addressed.

24 FINANCING ISSUES

24.1 Funding for the proposal will be sourced by DHA from any or all of the sale of surplus housing stock, the public sale of development houses, funds realised from the sale and leaseback scheme, application of surplus operating capital, or debt financing. The present intention is to make all residences available for Sale & Leaseback.

25 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

25.1 The project will be managed by DHA employing the services of a professional Project Manager and other professional consultants and building contractors.

LOCAL IMPACTS

26 ECONOMIC EFFECTS

26.1 Australian manufactured building products will receive preferential treatment in the selection of construction materials and finishes.

26.2 The proposed project will have a positive effect on the local economy during the construction period, not only through persons working directly on the site but also through the many others off-site who will be supplying material, plant and equipment.

27 COMMUNITY EFFECTS

27.1 Community impact is low. The site was previously used as a Pitch & Putt Golf Course, and is located within an established residential area of the city close to Queanbeyan's CBD.

28 HOUSING MARKET EFFECTS

28.1 In the Queanbeyan housing market, construction of 40 new dwellings is not expected to affect either the sale or rental markets for residential accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION





- 1 VEHICULAR SITE ENTRY
- 2 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS THROUGH SITE
- 3 DIRECTION OF FALL ACROSS SITR
- 4 VIEWS TOWARDS BMT AMD MT AINSLIE
- 5 EXISTING TOWNHOUSES
- 6 EXISTING CLUB HOUSE
- 7 OPEN SPACE BUFFER
- 8 EXISTING RACE COURSE CLUBHOUSE
- 9 BUS STOP

ITEM 3: SITE CONFIGURATION PLAN



ITEM 4: SITE MASTER PLAN











ITEM 8: INDICATIVE STREETSCAPE

