



Hon Tony Kelly MLC
Minister for Planning
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Lands
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Leader of the House in the Legislative Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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HOUSING AND JOBS BOOST FOR THE TWEED

A \$141 million residential, commercial and retail development with capacity for more than 1,600 new homes at Bilambil Heights has been given concept plan approval.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, said a separate residential subdivision has also been approved on a former quarry site within Bilambil Village.

“The proposals would be important in achieving the housing and employment targets in the Government’s Far North Coast Regional Strategy,” the Minister said.

The 187-hectare site at Bilambil Heights has been identified by Tweed Shire Council for development since 1991 and will deliver:

- 1,604 residential dwellings;
- A 200 bed nursing home;
- 4,447 square metres of retail space;
- 5,300 square metres of commercial space; and
- 38.8 hectares of open space and conservation lands.

The Far North Coast Regional Strategy identifies the region’s population will grow by more than 60,000 by 2031.

Mr Kelly said the Tweed Shire itself will require a further 19,100 dwellings over this period and this development represents an important contribution to meeting that target.

“Importantly, it also plays a key role in achieving that target sustainably, and will also provide a significant source of new employment opportunities for new and existing residents,” the Minister said.

“By catering for growth in an inland area of the region, it will also help to protect coastal areas from overdevelopment while at the same time sustaining and invigorating a non-coastal area.

“This too, is a key aim of the Government’s regional strategy.”

Mr Kelly said the concept plan had been exhibited and approved concurrently with a State significant site (SSS) proposal, which rezones and establishes appropriate development standards for the site.

“In allowing both the rezoning and concept plan proposal to be viewed and assessed concurrently, the SSS process has delivered greater clarity for the public and a far more streamlined planning process,” the Minister said.

As a result of community consultation, 36 conditions have been imposed including:



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- The reduction of the original building heights from eight to four storeys (up to 13.6 metres) in line with proposed limits that will apply across the majority of the Shire under Council's draft planning controls;
- A two-hectare area to be known as Precinct J, which was designated for development including 16 dwellings, now being zoned for environmental protection;
- The preparation of regeneration strategies to ensure other areas containing endangered ecological communities are also appropriately protected and rehabilitated.
- The restriction of development on the site which would increase traffic on Kennedy Drive beyond its existing capacity, until necessary agreements have been reached for increased capacity; and
- The requirement of proponent, Terranora Group Management, to undertake a number of local road and intersection upgrades in consultation with Council, including upgrades to Marana Street and Cobaki Road;

Tweed Shire Council will now be the consent authority for future development applications for the remaining stages of the project.

Mr Kelly said the separate approval of a subdivision within Bilambil Village would allow for the redevelopment of a former quarry site as a residential hub, and contribute to better water quality and protection of both Bilambil Creek and the Terranora Broadwater further downstream.

A new public reserve will also be dedicated to Council and replanted with sub-tropical rainforest species.

The approval allows for:

- 48 residential lots;
- The extension and revitalisation of the village centre with construction of a childcare centre adjacent to the existing community hall;
- Construction of a playground within a new local park;
- Connection of reticulated sewerage infrastructure to the site including removal of septic tanks;
- Creation of a 35 metre wide vegetated buffer zone along the margins of Bilambil Creek to enhance biodiversity and protect the creek; and
- The upgrading of surrounding roads.

Mr Kelly said modifications to the design, scale and landscaping achieved as part of the Department of Planning's assessment will also ensure the development is sensitive to the surrounding village character and rural-residential land uses.

"In particular, the edges of the development will be required to blend into the surrounding village through the use of larger lot sizes, vegetation and landscaping," the Minister said.

"Future applications for actual construction will be considered against the surrounding character of the village."