29 June, 2010

JERBERRA ESTATE – BALL IN COUNCIL’S COURT

The NSW Government has today rejected any link between reported evictions in Shoalhaven’s Jerberra Estate and rezoning issues.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, emphasised Shoalhaven City Council has been given guidance from the NSW Government to further progress a rezoning of the estate.

“I’m advised officers from the Department of Planning and DECCW wrote to council on 31 May 2010 formally advising it that they are prepared to support limited development in the Jerberra Estate provided the area’s environmental values are protected,” the Minister said.

“To do so, council was encouraged to investigate the possibility of community title and or bio-certification to ensure a benefit for all landowners.

“At this stage, the Government has not yet received a formal response from the council regarding this approach.

“The NSW Government is actively working to achieve a balanced outcome for the Jerberra Estate site which ensures the conservation of environmentally significant areas on-site as well as allowing for some residential development, where appropriate.

“It is not fair or realistic for council to link rezoning issues to the proposed orders against residents over alleged illegal dwellings.

“The site has been a paper subdivision – whereby it has been subdivided for settlement but not actually zoned as such – for 88 years since 1922.

“To claim recent discussions over zoning have led to the council’s actions, considering the long history of zoning discussions for the site, is ridiculous.

“It is also not in line with the spirit of co-operation that has existed between the Department of Planning and council to resolve these issues.”

A working party comprised of the Department of Planning, Shoalhaven City Council and the Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water (DECCW), has been working collaboratively since 2007 to deliver a co-ordinated approach for future use of the site.

At this time, the council has completed a detailed local environment study for the site and the three parties are now working to achieve an equitable outcome for owners and the environment based on the findings of this study.

The Government expects once an agreement is reached between all parties, council would seek approval from the Department of Planning to exhibit a draft local environmental plan for the site which reflects the agreed approach.