

06_0135 TOURIST & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Subject: 06_0135 TOURIST & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
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I wish to make some comments re the above mentioned development.

I believe approval of this development will not be in the best interest of the Shoalhaven Community or Jervis Bay environment.

The development of the property known as "Comberton Grange" will be in community title so the proprietor (the Shaolins) will control who buys into the subdivisions. As well, under federal and state legislation this religious order may pay little or no tax or rates which will not benefit the local Shoalhaven economy nor benefit Shoalhaven City Council's revenue from land rates.

Shoalhaven Council City (SCC) has allowed the land to be in the hands of the Shaolin Foundation for seven years while other parties have expressed interest in purchasing the property. During this time the Shaolin haven not paid one cent for the property and SCC has even lent the deposit (interest free) to the Shaolin Foundation. Instead of the local community benefitting from the sale of this property, it has been a huge expense for local rate payers. Residents rates have increased while SCC has been lending money to the Shaolin.

Since 2006 Shoalhaven Council has extended (at the request of the Shaolins) the settlement date several times. The low interest rate owing to Council has been deferred several times and no monies will be payable until the Environmental Assessment is approved by the State government, if ever!

The proposed subdivisions will mainly consist of accommodation for monks, students and aged care facilities, and the development could exceed the population of Berry. So much for a tourism facility in the bush! Comberton Grange sits on the banks of the Currumbene Creek which feeds directly into Jervis Bay. The run off from this development into the Jervis Bay catchment will surely have an adverse impact on its pristine environment.

Comberton Grange was originally purchased for its hard rock deposits. Despite the City Services Manager (Barry Russell) saying how much money Council would save having this resource and the previous Quarry Manager (Peter Jurgins) issuing a public statement as to the high quality of the material, the quarry was placed by the Councillors in the sale contract!

This is not a suitable development for this area of land and should not be given approval to proceed.

Your faithfully,

Melinda Phelps

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