

QUEANBEYAN AGE COLUMN 16 May 2008

Keeping up to date – QBC has received important briefings within the past week:

CBD Masterplan – Sydney based PLACE Planning Design Group and Elton Consulting, retained by Queanbeyan City Council to prepare a CBD Masterplan, met with QBC as part of a range of preliminary meetings with stakeholders.

Expertise for the Masterplan will be drawn from major consultancy companies covering Social, Land Analysis/Investment, Transport/ Infrastructure, Lighting and Accessibility aspects.

QBC representatives expressed the view that an effective CBD Masterplan would benefit from a wide interpretation of the CBD area under review, including Queanbeyan River, Queanbeyan Park and Queanbeyan Showgrounds with which the CBD shares interface. The Masterplan should reflect the CBD role as the Queanbeyan hub in terms of Community, Commercial and Civic (ie government and leadership) aspects.

Having previously highlighted issues such as traffic, office space and CBD living opportunities, QBC will be providing significant input to the Masterplan as it develops.

The Canberra Technology City (CTC) Project – This facility, planned for Mugga Lane just across the ACT border, is designed to provide a secure location for government departments, major corporates and overseas clients to place their computer systems.

The 21 Ha site will be “mirrored” by a 14 Ha site in the Belconnen area, enabling the campus to run dual systems providing permanent backup facilities. A consortium including Sydney based Technical Real Estate, UK based data centre specialist Galileo Connect and ActewAGL, have developed a dual site Masterplan to support 30 data centres.

These facilities, representing an investment close to \$2 billion, would place the Canberra Region at the forefront of global data centre capability, attracting worldwide interest.

Accepting that power requirements will be ‘enormous’, the consortium claims that the on-site gas and steam based power station will cut greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 80% compared to clients’ current operations – making CTC data centres the “most efficient and green in Asia Pacific”.

The Mugga Lane facility will operate 24 hours, 7 days per week employing more than 400 people. Significant training and re-training will be required to enable staff to operate within this groundbreaking environment.

With construction planned to start mid 2009, the immediate opportunity for Queanbeyan will be the provision of facilities for workers – for which we are well equipped. In the longer term, the CTC will provide employment for a highly skilled work force, many requiring accommodation in the area.

National Volunteer Week - QBC salutes the myriads of volunteers who provide such valuable services throughout our City. We know how much the efforts of our marvellous Visitor Information Centre volunteers are appreciated. Their individual enthusiasm, knowledge and experience add value to visitor experiences.

To all volunteers – Thank You!