

Tuesday's Business Weekly

Law firm lends a hand — Page 16

■ DEVELOPMENT

Our new suburban utopia

By LYNNIS BONANNO

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If you were creating your dream suburb, what would it look like? For many it might have a lot of the elements of the proposed Plantation Palms development at Eimeo, which is something like a suburban utopia.

Getting all the necessary approvals from council has been a lengthy and continuing process for developer Kim Clarke, but the dream goes like this.

Look to the right as you take the new bypass to Eimeo, and a vista of trees will welcome residents into the main boulevard – wider, tree-lined and inviting, complemented with more tree-lined avenues and streets.

The trees provide canopy cover, inviting people to get out and walk, enjoying the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

Parks and wetlands, as well as natural bush areas, are everywhere, taking up more than 50% of the development; Farmhouse Park, Plantation Park, Paperbark Lagoon, Eulbertie Park, Eucalypt Park to name a few, with more trees, lawns, wetlands, and timber boardwalks. The plan is for at least 10 parks, kept green underfoot with grey water (recycled washing water from the development), and lighted overhead with solar street lighting.

Streets are strategically placed to make the most of the south-easterlies, to capitalise on cooling sea breezes.

Now to your home, villa or unit, fully connected to gas for energy efficiency.

A big plus in this age of technology is that Plantation Palms will be a Telstra Smart Community, with optic fibre cabling through the entire development, enabling a level of speed and efficiency for home-based businesses,

and multi-users which we currently can't imagine.

Utilisation of space is paramount, with homes brought forward on blocks, internal or external, at the back. Garages are set back, and you can forget black Colorbond roofs and garage doors; they absorb too much heat.

Plantation Palms was formerly the 347 hectare Eulbertie cane farm, which was operated by the Symons family for 100 years, and Kim Clarke has incorporated elements of its history into his plan.

The original farmhouse will be set in parkland and converted into an artists and interpretative centre. Other features that Mr Clarke wants to incorporate over the 10 years of its creation include sporting fields, a culture trail and outdoor teaching facilities.

If you are thinking a lot of detailed design adds up to a lot of expense, blocks of land will be for sale for \$135,000 for the least of these, with a range between \$150,000 to \$210,000 standard.

Surveyors, engineers, urban designers and architects have poured over 2000 hours into creating Mr Clarke's super suburb, but the question that comes to mind is, why go to this much trouble?

"This is socially responsible development," Mr Clarke said.

"If you're going to develop, do you put in tar sealed roads and services, and cul-de-sacs which are nasty and cheap, or do you consider the natural environment?"

"You've got to have the vision first, because you can't go back and re-subdivide blocks.

You can catch the vision by checking out the Plantation Palms marketing suite on site, or visit their website at www.startliving.com.au



CREATING A SUPER SUBURB: Plantation Palms developer Kim Clarke, on site at Eimeo.

Picture: AMANDA BALMER. 020807/001



AN artist's impression of life in the tree-lined vista of Plantation Palms.

Picture: Contributed

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FREE SEMINAR

DATE
Tuesday
14th August 2007

TIME
6.45pm for a
7.00pm start
(8.30pm finish)

VENUE
"Winton Room"
Windmill Motel
North Mackay
(Supper provided)

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