Rezoning Paves The Way For New Prison Precinct

The Development Consent Authority has approved the Territory Government’s application to rezone 289 hectares of vacant Crown land at Holtze where a new prison precinct will be built.

Corrections Minister Gerry McCarthy said the precinct will incorporate an 800-bed secure prison, a 36-bed secure mental health unit and 50 bed supported accommodation and program centre to be built about four kilometres north of the Howard Springs Road.

Mr McCarthy said the DCA’s approval means part of section 4225 Hundred of Bagot changes from Zone R (Rural) to Zone CP (Community Purposes) and Zone U (Utilities). Part of portion 2820 Hundred of Bagot changes from Zone RL (Rural Living) to Zone U (Utilities).

“These new facilities are a key element of the Territory Government’s New Era in Corrections to break the cycle of re-offending and reduce prison numbers,” Mr McCarthy said.

“The existing prison at Berrimah is outdated and beyond upgrade if we want to deliver the education and rehabilitation programs needed to cut the imprisonment rate.

“That’s why we are building a new precinct for prisoners and a program centre for community based offenders at Holtze so that we can deliver more targeted programs in a more efficient way to help all offenders get their lives back on track and positively contribute to society.”

Mr McCarthy said local company Tonkin Consulting was awarded a $145,000 tender in January to design and document road access and headworks to support construction of the new precinct at Holtze.

Three consortia – Axiom Corrections, SeNTinel and Assure Partners – have been short-listed for a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with the Northern Territory Government to design, construct, finance and maintain the new facilities.

“A Public Private Partnership will deliver the best value for Territorians and is expected to create more than 1,000 direct and indirect jobs and generate significant opportunities for local businesses,” Mr McCarthy said.

“The purpose built new facilities will deliver best practice in design and construction, including security systems, and will have dedicated areas to deliver education, training and rehabilitation programs.”

Construction of the facilities is set to begin late this year and be complete in 2014.

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