



“The Camden Haven Eco Village” Sustainable Village

LOCATION

“The Camden Haven Eco Village” is located 30 km south from Port Macquarie on the NSW mid-north coast, and on the banks of the beautiful Camden Haven River. It is 10 minutes’ drive from several pristine surfing beaches, lakes, National Parks and State Forests, whilst the Camden Haven Golf course is almost adjacent to the north. The undulating site enjoys views of the river, and over farmland to forests and mountains to the east, south and west. The Camden Haven area has become a focus for major cultural events, including literature and music, whilst local shops, theatre, schools, sporting and medical facilities are all handy. The major regional centre of Port Macquarie provides all necessary services and amenities. Its recently upgraded airport, serviced daily by both Virgin and Qantas Airlines, is 20 minutes’ drive away, and Sydney is 3.5 hours by road, most of it dual highway and freeway.

PROJECT

The Village is designed to set new benchmarks for sustainable development in Australia. It consists of 65 dwellings, 6 of which are zoned commercial, allowing people to work from home, 8 are townhouses, and the remainder individual dwellings on lots arranged in clusters of between 6 and 8. Each cluster has its own small community central space, and those clusters in turn are loosely arranged around a large central common open space with amenities and facilities such as a community centre, lap pool and tennis court, all adjacent to a small lake. The Village is self reliant for potable water supply, self reliant on sewerage treatment and re-use, harvests and re-uses stormwater, and has community productive gardens and orchards. Each dwelling will generate some green energy, fed back to the grid. Extensive walking and bicycle paths meander through the Village, and connect to the Camden Haven River with a small boat ramp and boat store, and a footbridge to a park separated by a creek. Extensive areas of native bushland have been set aside in two Environment Protection Zones, and the old heritage-listed Struggletown Chimneys are to be stabilized and preserved in a Heritage Protection Zone. The Village will trial a car share, using a hybrid or low energy vehicle. An Educational Charitable Trust will allow students to visit and learn from the sustainable systems incorporated in the Village, and data will be collected and published annually.

An independent assessment by Engineers Patterson Britton has concluded that “The Camden Haven Eco Village” will cut greenhouse gas emissions by 48%, when compared with a conventional development of the same size.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. A Sustainable Subdivision**
To show by example that a sustainable subdivision can be practical, profitable, financially viable, and quick to build, when compared with a conventional unsustainable subdivision.
- 2. Demonstration Project**
To demonstrate by Australian Best Practice and employment of leading experts and use of current technology that a sustainable subdivision can meet all requirements, and be independent of Council’s water and sewerage and road systems, recycle all water for re-use within the development, generate most of its own energy, and contribute to some of its own food needs.
- 3. Regional Benefits**
To positively answer concerns about unsustainable coastal developments and their ever-increasing drain on resources, services and amenities.
- 4. Social Sustainability**
To create a design which specifically creates full time jobs and infrastructure for more on site employment and businesses; provides places for children to play, safe from cars without supervision; and replaces social isolation of unsustainable subdivisions with places of conversation, community and education.
- 5. Sustainable Architecture**
To create buildings and spaces which are user-friendly and easy to build using local materials and tradespeople, are compatible with each other and the locality, and cause least damage to the environment. Buildings will be cool in summer and warm in winter without air conditioning.
- 6. Mainstreaming Sustainable Design**
To demonstrate that sustainable houses and subdivisions need not look markedly different, cost more, offer less amenity, nor be less desirable, than conventional unsustainable houses in a conventional unsustainable subdivision.
- 7. Council, Agency and Developer Partnership**
To seek active support from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council in pursuit of these objectives, and generate publicity for the Council and agencies, from a timely and successful example of responsible development. To generate data on sales, building and living costs which can be used by Council and agencies to inform the regional development market of the benefits of sustainable subdivisions.