



## Media Release

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# Googong North named ACT's top development

One of the biggest private township developments in Australia has taken top honours for masterplanned communities in the prestigious 2020 Property Council ACT and Rider Levett Bucknall awards.

Googong North sets a new benchmark for socially, economically and environmentally sustainable greenfields communities, demonstrating that effective planning, creative design and early investment in infrastructure are key to attracting and engaging residents in new areas.

The innovative project – a collaboration between national development industry leaders Peet Limited and Mirvac – is located 16 kilometres from Canberra's Parliament House, just inside the New South Wales border and adjacent to the ecologically-sensitive Googong Dam.

Googong North is the first of five self-contained neighbourhoods in the ambitious Googong development. It has brought new lifestyle choices and a ready supply of affordable housing and infrastructure to the growing region. The development is due for completion in 2020 and more than 1,800 of the 2,000 homes have been built.

Googong Project Director Malcolm Leslie said Googong North was the first step in the creation of a whole new town.

"Googong is unique because of its exciting vision and grand scale," Mr Leslie said.

"A huge amount of foresight has gone into the planning and design including more than a decade of environmental, ecological and heritage studies and community consultation.

"We set out to turn a degraded rural sheep farm into an attractive and sought-after modern suburb within a new township. That was a big ask and we couldn't have done it without close collaboration with our stakeholders, particularly the Commonwealth, NSW and ACT Governments and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council who all have an interest in the area."

Googong North is an attractive contemporary neighbourhood with tree-lined streets and all the facilities modern families expect – schools, shops, parks and playing fields.

Innovation and sustainability underpin the design backed by a \$292 million Voluntary Planning Agreement, one of the biggest infrastructure contribution arrangements in Australia. The agreement, between the developers and local government, was established to ensure public infrastructure and roads would keep pace with community growth.

A highlight is the design and construction of a \$133 million Integrated Water Cycle system providing recycled water to homes, gardens and public spaces and reducing potable water consumption by 60 per cent.

The plant is one of the biggest of its kind and part of a program of important environmental works, including the restoration of the Montgomery Creek chain of ponds and the creation of a protected habitat for the vulnerable Pink Tailed Worm-Lizard.

Almost 25 per cent of land in the Googong development area has been reserved for public open space and conservation, including enhancement and preservation of landmarks that pay tribute to the region's Aboriginal and colonial history.

The developers invested early in Googong North to ensure community amenities were in place before the first residents moved in. Facilities included a community centre and a sports club with indoor pool, gym and tennis courts, offering an initial five-years free membership for locals.

The creation of three sports fields, two dog parks, seven playgrounds and more than 10 kilometres of paths ensured all homes have a park within walking distance.

"This level of amenity was crucial for building a healthy, active and close-knit community," said Mr Leslie.

"That sense of belonging and community pride is a hallmark of the project and has become a valuable asset. Being "Googonian" is a big attractor for residents and new buyers."

Since 2012, Googong has become one of the fastest selling developments in the country. Over the next 15 years, the Googong community will incorporate 6,500 new homes and a major commercial centre servicing an ultimate population of 18,000 people.

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