



Riddell's Bay (Warwick Parish) Special Development Order 2020

Presented by:

Senator Anthony Richardson JP

Junior Minister for Home Affairs

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Madame President, last week the Minister of Home Affairs laid the Special Development Order titled: the Riddell's Bay (Warwick Parish) Special Development Order 2020 [SDO]. I am pleased to take the opportunity to provide the public with further information on the merits of this SDO and further relevant background information.

Madame President, Section 15 of the Development and Planning Act 1974 allows the Minister, by way of order, to grant planning permission. The Riddell's Bay Order will grant subdivision approval for two distinct purposes; residential development and conservation lots. Specifically, a total of eighteen (18) vacant residential lots will be approved; each to be developed with a detached house, and additionally, two (2) significantly sized vacant conservation lots will be approved to be comprehensively planted and restored which will provide a number of environmental and public benefits. Such benefits are to include the re-establishment of diverse native and endemic ecosystems as well as opportunities for passive recreational use.

Madame President, it is imperative to inform the public that the Riddell's Bay golf course was once retained only for the use of a certain segment of the community. With this scheme, I am most pleased that this land will now become publicly accessible to the entire community – a total of sixty-four (64) acres for the general public to enjoy for generations to come.

Madame President, the land subject of this Order is primarily zoned Recreation. It is important to note that the zoning of Recreation, as per the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018, permits recreational forms of development to support recreational activities. Such examples of the forms of development that may be sited in this zone include horse stables, riding schools, sports fields, community clubs, stadiums and the like.

Madame President, I wish to provide further background information regarding the comprehensive subdivision application process for the scheme. This project has undergone an exhaustive environmental analysis and scrutiny. The application submission included an Environmental Impact Statement and Conservation Management Plan. All legislated procedures were followed insofar that the statutory objection period occurred as well as extensive consultation with technical officers from other relevant Departments.

Madame President, the Department of Planning, in their review of the comprehensive submission, reached the conclusion that the proposal represented an appropriate form of sustainable development which would

bring about notable public benefits that would outweigh any harm brought about by the loss of Recreational zoned land.

Madame President, the Department's board report, accessible on their website, clearly articulated the following salient points:

1. The Development Applications Board (DAB) did not have the discretion to approve the application given the subdivision of land for residential lots is not permitted within a Recreation zoning as per the Draft Bermuda Plan 2018.
2. Given the inability for the DAB to approve coupled with the position of the Department that the application represented a scheme of national significance and importance, it therefore warranted a Special Development Order.

Madame President, following the DAB's decision, the Minister took the advice of the Department to consider this scheme as an SDO which would allow for transparency and debate in both Houses of the Legislature. An appeal to the subdivision application would have required a single

decision by the Minister which would not have had the same level of public scrutiny as an SDO process.

Madame President, the Order comprises precise conditions to require and ensure the following:

1. To afford the necessary planning assessment for each residential development through the requirement of individual planning applications to be submitted to the Department of Planning. These applications will each be assessed on their own merits, be subject to the statutory 14 day advertisement period, and subsequent approval by the DAB.
2. Implementation of a Conservation Management Plan for the planting and restorative works to be carried out for the new conservation areas. The implementation of this Plan includes the requirement for inspections to be undertaken at various phases during the residential construction process.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude by reiterating the tremendous benefits, both economically and ecologically, this scheme brings during these difficult

and uncertain times. The prospect of development opportunity offers hope for various business sectors as they navigate these turbulent economic times. In converting a defunct golf course of limited ecological value to new conservation areas, results in a significant net gain to not only the natural environment but also the local community.

Thank you, **Madame President.**