

### **3. Business Plan - Toolangi Heights**

Place of Assembly for the purpose of hosting events, such as weddings.

**Location:** 287 Smiths Road, Toolangi, 3777

**Site:** 60 Acres (23.98ha) (1 Title - 2 Land Parcels [1 @10 Acres (3.88ha), 1@50 Acres (20.1ha)])

The Site Map (appendix 1) provides a visual representation of the components relevant to this application. The attached Site Map only refers to the 10 acre (3.88ha) land parcel.

#### **Business Case**

The Last few years, in particular, have seen huge growth in non-traditional weddings. The reception centre style wedding is being consistently discarded by couples that want to tailor their wedding to their own style and tastes. Sites such as Toolangi Heights are in high demand for this style of wedding.

Sites, such as Toolangi Heights, allow couples to plan and execute a wedding that is far removed from the 'cookie cutter' reception style weddings.

Effectively, Toolangi Heights provides something of a 'blank canvass' for couples to create the style, atmosphere and feel that is an expression of them, their family and friends.

It is expected that most couples booking Toolangi Heights will come from Melbourne and suburbs, areas well outside the Murrindindi Shire. The main drawcard is the forest, the views and greenery that the area provides within easy reach of Central Melbourne and suburbs.

With so much interest in sites, such as Toolangi Heights, there is much scope to be selective about the size and scale of events permitted.

#### **Target Audience**

Whilst there definitely couples that would like to book Toolangi Heights for large scale events (200+ guests), Toolangi Heights wishes to concentrate on smaller scale functions, (120 guests maximum) for the following reasons.

- More manageable regards the ingress and egress of the site.
- Less likely to impact the amenity of residents on Smiths Road
- More environmentally conscious (less impact).
- More manageable regards movement of guests (should the need arise)

Essentially, Toolangi Heights is seeking to run a responsible business that will ultimately be seen as an asset to both the immediate area and shire in general.

## **Economic Impact**

Toolangi Heights is committed to fostering local business. Events, such as weddings, have many flow ons to local business.

A wedding of 120 guest will typically see over half seek accommodation in the local area. B & B's and hotel type accommodation will be the main beneficiary.

Other businesses that will likely see a rise in patronage are many but obvious ones are celebrants, florists, musicians, wait staff, food providers, dress makers, make-up and hair stylists. Businesses which have typically been hit hard in recent times and business which all exist within relatively close proximity to Toolangi Heights.

In addition to business directly benefiting from such events, many more will benefit indirectly via patronage of the many guests that will be staying in the area in the lead-up and following the event. For many, this may be their first visit to the area and may result in repeat visits in the future; regardless many new people will be drawn to the area.

## **Venue Management**

Toolangi Heights expects to conduct most of its events on weekends. There is the potential for smaller events at other times in the future but that is not the focus in the short term.

Extensive consultation with couples prior to the event will ensure that the logistics of all events, including emergency plans are well known and understood.

For most weddings, the event can be broken up into 3 main components.

- The Ceremony (covers arrival, parking and the formal part of the day)
- The Reception (covers the food, drink, and bulk of the day)
- The Aftermath (departing, or camping, clean-up)

## **Arrival and Parking**

The Traffic Assessment component of this application covers aspects of the arrival of guests, namely the traffic on Smiths Road. Upon arrival at the junction of Smiths Road and the venue (parking attendant positioned at his point), guests

will be directed to proceed to the designated parking area (see site map for details). Should a number of vehicles arrive in close proximity, they will be directed by the parking attendant to wait in a holding bay off Smiths Road, (ensuring that it is never blocked by traffic). The guests would be directed by two further parking attendants to the designated parking area, (see site map for details). In most circumstances, guests would be directed to the ceremony area that is being used immediately, typically only a short walk. Guests who require assistance would be directed to a waiting area where they would be escorted (either on foot or by vehicle).

## **Ceremony**

The Ceremony area can vary in accordance with the wishes of the couple (see site map for locations). Most ceremonies are completed in 30-45 minutes, with around 50% of the guests seated. The celebrant and/or MC does have the ability to communicate important messages and special announcements (usually at the beginning of the ceremony). The Celebrant / MC would be provided with both a standard list of announcements and a special list of announcements (should the need arise).

### **Standard Announcement List (consists of but not limited to)**

- Location of Amenities
- Movement of cars around property
- Disposal of Waste
- Smoking protocols
- Emergency Assembly Notification Process
- Emergency Assembly Notification Area

### **Special Announcement List**

This would be provided if there were some special circumstances particular to the day. For example there could be smoke in the air from distant (but known) fires. High Winds, High Temperatures, etc.

## **Food and Drink**

Food or drink for events is the responsibility of those booking the venue, however, clear rules will in place and enforced.

## **Food**

In most cases a third-party provides the food. This could consist of a food truck/van where the food is pre-prepared and then assembled and delivered on site. It may be cooked on site or some combination of the two. All food providers must have current permits, including current food handling qualifications. It is expected that food providers collect and dispose of their own waste.

## **Drink**

All beverages are provided by those booking the venue. Under no circumstances are beverages to be sold to guests. It is a requirement that all alcoholic beverages are served by qualified staff (over 18 and with current RSA qualifications) from a designated location (usually a portable bar).

## **Patron Management**

Guests are there to have a good time and celebrate, but incidents can occur and procedures need to be in place for this eventuality. The qualified drink staff are to oversee the responsible serving of alcohol and contact the venue manager regarding any incidents. Most incidents can be diffused by the 'cutting off' of further alcoholic beverages. This decision would be made in conjunction with the qualified staff, the venue manager and the designated contact person (often the MC) associated with the event. Any further escalation would be a joint decision and removal/collection from event is always an option.

Individual medical emergencies will be treated on a case by case basis, depending on a range of factors, including severity, medical past, qualifications of those present, etc. Should off site emergency medical treatment be necessary, the Healesville hospital (20 minutes away approx.) would be the logical destination in most circumstances.

## **Camping**

Events at Toolangi Heights may provide the option of onsite camping. Camping would typically be in tents; either provided by a third party (a glamping company) or by the guests themselves. Camping would be limited to 40 guests in total (as per the Land Capability Assessment (50 maximum)), although typically this

number would be lower. The provision of camping would be subject to the same constraints as event itself in terms of the Bushfire Emergency Management Plan. In essence, this means that should the Fire Danger Rating be Severe or higher on the day following the main event, then camping would not be permitted.

## **Waste Disposal**

Toolangi Heights takes waste disposal seriously. It is proposed that the disposal of waste (whilst the responsibility of the venue hirer) will be incorporated into the cost of the hiring the venue. A provider, such as, Primo Waste, a relatively local waste disposal company, would drop of a large caged trailer with a number of 100 litre, high strength bags, that will allow for the systematic sorting of waste into glass, plastics and general rubbish very easily. The trailer can hold almost 6 cubic metres of rubbish, ample room for any event.



## **Complaints Procedure**

Toolangi Heights wishes to be seen as an asset to the local community, providing work for local businesses both directly and indirectly. Toolangi Heights wishes to impact the local environment in only positive directions, however,

should issues arise that cause any form of concern for local residents or businesses, Toolangi Heights wants to be approachable and conciliatory in any such occurrences. To this end, a mobile phone number will be readily available and accessible to respond to any issues in a timely fashion.