

The Village Building Co. Limited

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The Office of the Chief Executive



Senator Glenn Sterle
Chairman,
The Senate Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
Email: senator.sterle@aph.gov.au

23 October 2009

Dear Senator Sterle,

I write to request an opportunity to respond before your Committee to false accusations and misleading information by Senator Heffernan during the Estimates hearings on Tuesday 20 October. These concern the proposed residential development of Tralee, adjacent to Jerrabomberra in NSW. We also wish to respond to misleading statements by AirServices Australia. In recent years, on three separate occasions Senator Heffernan has used hearings of your Committee to attack the Company and me personally.

In a speech to the Senate on 13 March 2008, Senator Heffernan accused the company of offering him a bribe in relation to a planning approval which falls solely within the jurisdiction of NSW. His accusation of alleged bribery was subsequently printed in the Sydney Morning Herald the following day with serious damage to this firm and me. He then withdrew the accusation. In a further hearing before your Committee, Senator Heffernan spoke about having referred a matter to the Federal police implying this to be a complaint against this company. He knew however, that the matter investigated by police at his request, related to Canberra Airport only.

At Tuesday's hearing he also alleged there had been meetings between himself and a lobbyist. No such meeting ever occurred. There were meetings between Village Building Co. and Senator Heffernan. No lobbyist attended any VBC meeting with Senator Heffernan.

On three occasions including 30 January 2007, 21 May 2007 and 20 October 2009 he has presented to the Committee false information relating to the impact of our rezoning proposal at Tralee on surrounding communities. The current Tralee proposal before the NSW Government does not involve the location of any houses under any Canberra Airport flight paths. This is confirmed by information published by AirServices Australia, which contradicts assertions by Senator Heffernan.

These ongoing false accusations and statements before your Committee have caused damage to this firm and me. I now seek an opportunity to attend upon your Committee to reply to Senator Heffernan's reckless allegations made under the protection of Parliamentary privilege.

Yours sincerely,

R. Winnel,
Chief Executive