

A WORK IN PROGRESS

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Winner:
Linton Estate
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Peter Dickson of Linton Estate won the award for the best special interest development plan for a retirement community in 2010.

A brave new world is being created in Ballan in Victoria. Peter Dickson is carefully crafting Australia's first purpose built GLBTIQ retirement community.

Mr Dickson is at the forefront of a new worldwide movement. Whilst ageing baby boomers are resisting living in age apartheid compounds, they are gravitating to shared interest estates. Education, sport, gardening and special-interests (hot-rods, libraries, wellness, meditation, spirituality) are imbuing new communities.

Mr Dickson is leading the trend in Australia. He is creating an environment in which the GLBTIQ community can live in safety and comfort.

The 120 dwelling, low-rise over-55s complex will include an art studio, craft studio, billiards room, BBQ area/s, business centre, community centre, cinema, croquet lawn, tennis court, putting green, gymnasium, library, meeting room, outdoor bowling green, indoor heated spa, indoor heated pool, café, lounge bar, restaurant, residents lounge, wet and dry saunas, wellness and day spa.

The haven is bounded by walking tracks which intersect with lakes and large spacious parkland areas.

The community will have solid green credentials with grey water and storm water harvesting, solar hot water, an energy rating



Photo: Peter Dickson (Managing Director) with Alexandra Regos (Operations Director) receives the award for the work on Australia's first purpose built GLBTIQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer) retirement haven being developed in Ballan in Victoria.

of 5/6 star and an emphasis on water recycling. Pets are welcomed.

Peter Dickson has carefully studied the GLBTIQ retirement community movement around the world and has designed a unique Australian response of compelling intimacy.

The development of special interest communities is a recent phenomenon. The most successful GLBTIQ community is in Sante Fe, Arizona. But similar communities are being advanced in Vancouver, Canada and in Rancho Mirage in the Palm Springs conurbation.

Both these latter communities have yet to be granted development approval.

Other special interest communities include ex-university staff compounds (The Academy in Tucson), cricket lovers (the Live-in Stadium at the Somerset County Cricket Ground in Taunton in the UK), religious retreats (Ennismore in Cork), and football (Genesis at Wembley).

The \$26 million project was approved by the Moorabool Shire Council in late 2007. The haven was a semi-rural setting on the junction of Old Melbourne Road and Ballan-Geelong Road.

"The proposal only ever drew four objections," said Moorabool Shire Mayor Dianne McAuliffe in 2007.

Whilst gay resorts have been previously attempted in far north Queensland 'motels,' this is the first purpose built gay-oriented facility attempted in the southern hemisphere which is open to all people as long as they are respectful of each other and like-minded.

Mr Dickson has retained a majority shareholding in the project. Mr Dickson is gay.

"It is important to create safe places for everyone to age in place," said Mr Dickson.

"GLBTIQ clients post challenges for straight retirement communities," added Mr Dickson.

"It may always be an issue because not just staff attitudes and opinions have to change. It is also the other residents' attitude and opinions that have to change, and that is near impossible," he said.

"What people want more than anything else is peace of mind and security and Linton Estate will deliver that tranquility," said Peter Dickson.

(www.lintonestate.com.au)

AWARD

The best special interest development plan for a retirement community in Australasia in 2010.

LINTON ESTATE

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