

Tuggeranong development

By Larissa Nicholson

Tuggeranong residents' associations have called on the ACTI government to halt land sales in the south-east of the town centre until a master plan is formulated to ensure new developments bring jobs for locals.

The South East Tuggeranong Residents' Association asked for land sales to cease in a half-kilometre radius around the Tuggeranong Homestead, an area that takes in

parts of Richardson, Calwell and Isabella Plains, after an Australian Bureau of Statistics report indicated Richardson was one of the most disadvantaged suburbs in Canberra.

The report used census data to rank areas of Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage, defined by "people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society".

The ABS measured residents' level of education, the number of bed-

rooms in their homes, whether they spoke English well and if they were in one-parent households with dependent children.

A household income of more than \$52,000 a year or a job as a manager or professional were measures of advantage; being a labourer or living in a home without the internet were indicators of disadvantage.

Association chairman Russ Morrison said it had long called for a master plan for south-east Tuggeran-

ong, but, given the ABS report, land sales should cease until the government planned for better employment opportunities and community services for the people living in the area.

Mr Morrison said the government's approach to planning in south-east Tuggeranong was ad hoc and lacked community consultation and he feared much of the territory land in the area would be sold off before a plan was in place for utilising it to the benefit of the residents.

ad hoc: residents

"Let's talk at the beginning so we don't have to re-engineer down the track. Let's sit down and agree on a way forward that the community would be happy with, and let's find out what the community wants," he said.

Tuggeranong Community Council president Nick Tsoulas supported the move, saying people living in south-east Tuggeranong needed more low-skilled jobs and better public transport.

But Minister for Economic Development Andrew Barr said the government recently completed a Tuggeranong town centre master plan to help promote development and growth, and halting development in south-east Tuggeranong pending a master plan would do little to help growth in the region.

"The release of land for homes not only creates employment during construction, it brings new residents to the area, creating greater vitality

and bringing more people to local shops and services," he said.

Mr Barr said the government was committed to helping all residents to participate fully in the community and Chief Minister Katy Gallagher recently attended a council meeting to discuss plans for the town centre.

"The government has programs to help disadvantaged Canberrans, notably the affordable housing action plan and targeted assistance strategy," Mr Barr said.