

Sir Nick Faldo and Kura Design to tee off New Zealand golf course and luxury housing development

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Plans have been released for an exclusive new residential housing development to be built around an 18 hole tournament golf course and wetland nature reserve at Spencerville in the north-eastern part of Christchurch.

The \$160million exclusive enclave is to be known as Whisper Creek. The 157 hectare development will include:

- > 141 high-end residential sections ranging in size from 1000 square metres to 2250 square metres
- > An 18 hole international golf course being designed by golfing legend Sir Nick Faldo together with Christchurch-based golf course architect Kristine Kerr of Kura Golf Course Design. The golf course will be the base for an international golf training academy attracting young golfers from Europe and Asia
- > 113 resort apartments for use by either leisure tourists or as accommodation for those attending the golfing academy
- > 41 hectares of ecological parkland encompassing a public walkway, indigenous wetland plantings, and horse/cycling track and
- > A members-only sports complex containing a 25 metre indoor heated swimming pool with adjoining spa and sauna amenities.

The environmental wetland adjacent to the Styx River is to be gifted in perpetuity to Christchurch Council. The land is currently used for sheep and beef grazing.



The golf course and residential subdivision is owned by long-time Canterbury businessman Thomas Na who has spent 12 years and some \$17million getting the land ready to take to the market - including gaining approval from the Overseas Investment Office, and acquiring the necessary council consents. Mr Na selected the Spencerville site in the early 2000s ahead of other potential locations in Seattle and Sydney.

Sir Nick Faldo said that he had been carefully planning the Whisper Creek golf course lay out in his head for the past four years, and with consent now granted, he was eagerly anticipating working on site and spending time down in Christchurch as the course takes shape.

"New Zealand is a country which loves sport, and I'm looking forward to adding my own contribution to the country's sporting culture. In particular, it's going to be a privilege to play a role in Christchurch's regeneration after such a difficult few years," Sir Nick said.

"Memorability, strategy and the visual 'wow factor' are the three things always in my mind when designing a course like Whisper Creek."

Working in association with Faldo Design, Kristine Kerr brings her expertise and local presence to the project. She says that specifically, the design of the golf course seeks to: provide a variety of golf shot-making, emphasising subtlety and strategy, deliberately integrate landforms into the strategy of each hole and create a natural, ecologically sound, attractive and harmonious landscape

There is an element of the community wanting "high end" larger than normal sites. This is a one off opportunity in that there will only ever be 141 sites. There is no room, nor any plans, to expand further...so once they are gone that's it"

Commercial activities from the golf academy are forecast to attract up to 160 budding young golfing professionals each year - generating an estimated \$68million annually for the local economy.

The Whisper Creek academy, golf course, and their combined support infrastructure are forecast to create 120 part-time and full-time jobs for golfing coaches, green keepers, food/beverage and accommodation personnel, as well as administrative staff for the business.

Earthworks at the Whisper Creek residential enclave are scheduled to begin in early 2014 - laying the way for installation of infrastructure and services including power, telecommunications and waste water. Building of the first houses within the development is expected to begin in autumn 2015 when land titles are issued. The golf course is also scheduled to open in 2015.

The first 24 sections within Whisper Creek would be sold at a discounted rate of 20 percent. No further discounting will be offered on the remaining 117 plots.

"This first stage of 68 sites will effectively set the benchmark for future values. Whisper Creek will be unique from other golfing-based residential subdivisions in Canterbury. With its proximity to Christchurch's urban ring and the fixed number of sections that can be developed-exclusivity is guaranteed"

Latest data from the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand shows that average property values in Christchurch have risen by more than 12 percent year-on-year - with the median price rising by \$40,000 and the average number of days homes are on the market falling to just 26.

"Judging on those statistics, it is foreseeable that by the time the final allocation of Whisper Creek sections comes onto the market in the second quarter next year, the land values will most likely well be considerably above the section prices on offer now - especially factoring in the discount," Mr Jones said.

