Media Release
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GOLDEN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT

SET TO BEGIN BY END OF YEAR

The Bendigo community is set to get a new bushland conservation reserve in Golden Square following approval by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) of plans which will see the downsizing of the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst's residential property.

The development includes donating almost half the property (7.15 hectares) to the Bendigo community as a bushland conservation reserve, along with a residential subdivision for 82 housing lots on the site at 133-136 Aspinall Street.

The Business Manager of the Diocese, Mr Cameron Fraser, said the bushland conservation reserve should be separated from the proposed development site within months and Stage 1 of the subdivision, comprising 34 lots, should begin later this year. Stage 2, which includes 26 lots, should begin next year.

Mr Fraser said the Diocese is grateful for the fair hearing it received at VCAT and believes the development strikes a good balance between respecting the environment and releasing capital to the significant community works of the Diocese which covers 40 parishes across central and north-east Victoria.

"The Church needed to explore alternative ways of funding its social and welfare programmes in order to serve its community", Mr Fraser said. The broader community benefits of the development included the new bushland conservation reserve and the supply of sorely-needed new housing stock only five kilometres from the CBD of Bendigo, which has experienced one of the highest population growths in Victoria.

The Diocese is also a key supporter of the Aspire Cultural & Charitable Foundation, which seeks to create Australia's first inter-faith precinct that fosters inter-faith collaboration, promotes regional resilience and cohesion, provides life-long learning and supports social entrepreneurship.

Media contact: Michael Smith 0411 055 306