



Hotel groups reserve rooms

Business turns attention to new Maroochydhore CBD development

BUSINESS hotel groups are circling the new Maroochydhore CBD project with several leading brands expressing interest in developing and operating a venue in the city centre.

Details of a planned hotel development are expected to be revealed before the end of the year.

The news comes hot on the heels of an announcement last week that global infrastructure and property development giant John Holland was poised to strike a \$200million deal for five super-lots totalling 1.4 hectares in the new city centre.

The John Holland submission could include construction of the new Sunshine Coast Council headquarters plus student accommodation and teaching facilities for the University of the Sunshine Coast.

SunCentral Maroochydhore, the company established to oversee design and delivery of the new Maroochydhore CBD, has been in negotiations with several hotel groups since expressions of interest for the core commercial precincts opened.

SunCentral chief executive officer John Knaggs said strong interest in the new city reflected great confidence in the development.

"Confidential discussions are continuing but there is no doubt that this site has captured the attention of Australia's business community including hotel operators," he said.

"The new hotel will primarily be aimed at business clientele and there is widespread recognition that demand for such accommodation will grow significantly as the CBD takes shape."

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has estimated up to two million more passengers would be flying into the region by 2040 once the expanded Sunshine Coast Airport was

operational by 2020.

"Maroochydhore is already the commercial heart of the entire region but the introduction of direct international flights from Asia to the Sunshine Coast will be a huge driver of business travel to our region," Mr Knaggs said.

"We've seen an 8% increase in business travel to the Sunshine Coast in recent years and 230,000 people have attended business events in the region in the year ending March 2017.

"All indications are that this growth will continue with improved access and infrastructure."

Leading KPMG demographer Bernard Salt predicted national technology, construction and professional services companies would have head offices on the Sunshine Coast by 2040, driving business visitation to the region.

In his report, *The Activated City: Imagining the Sunshine Coast in 2040*, Mr Salt said the expansion of the Sunshine Coast Airport with direct flights to Asia, the creation of a new CBD at Maroochydhore, the light rail line from Caloundra to the airport and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital would trigger transformative economic change.

"By the 2030s, there will be flourishing businesses based on the Sunshine Coast that

export to and that connect with South East Asia as comfortably as they connect with other parts of Australia," Mr Salt said.

"By 2040 there will be head offices of nationally significant businesses based in Maroochydhore, mostly in the services, technology and construction sectors."

Mr Knaggs said discussions were continuing with a number of other parties seeking to develop commercial, retail, residential and mixed-use projects in the 53-hectare greenfield CBD site.



"We've been very encouraged by the expressions of interest we have received and look forward to turning these into exciting developments that create new careers for Sunshine Coast residents and exciting opportunities for local businesses."

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