Marinas gone troppro

Unprecedented demand for berths and luxury real estate to match

By JENNIFER O'Reilly

WATERFRONT living and luxury real estate is booming in North Queensland as marina developments continue full steam ahead in the region.

Airlie Beach's Abel Point Marina is the latest hot spot with more than 100 berths at the development already sold.

Developer Meridian has been carving out the new marina basin for the $400 million Port of Airlie project.

Meridian marina general manager Michael Rose said interest in the yet-to-be constructed marina berths at the Port of Airlie was high.

"The message is clear that marinas are in great demand," he said.

The developer bought the site for the Abel Point Marina just last year and already 110 berths have sold.

Mr Rose said marinas all along the Queensland coast were in high demand.

"New registrations in this state will soon surpass those in New South Wales," Mr Rose said.

"Growth of large boat registrations is far exceeding all averages."

Optima International research director Colin Dwyer said the region's marina boom was also an indicator of increasing disposable incomes.

"There has been a significant increase in disposable incomes," Mr Dwyer said.

"A lot of people are now able to afford boats and yachts."

"As our incomes increase there is going to be an increase in pressure for marinas."

Mr Dwyer said more marina developments could be on the cards for the region.

"You've got to have the right space for it," he said.

"Townsville is pretty well placed for marinas, but there are the environmental considerations."

In April, Bowen Shire Council also gave the nod to a $400 million marina development. The marina development will feature 600 berths and 100 residential units.

Townsville's own Breakwater Marina has seen unprecedented demand for luxury waterfront properties in the city since it was released by Breakwater Pacific.

The marina development saw $1 million in sales secured for 81 units in just four days worth of sales.

The deal will set on completion of stage one in mid-2008.

Breakwater Pacific had to move to accelerate plans for another 180 marina berths due to demand for the prestige city waterfront development.

It hopes to provide the extra berths by mid-2008 instead of the initial time frame of the next few years.

Cutting carbon emissions begins at home

Hutchinson Builders

The company's new headquarters are lean, mean and green.

The Duckworth St building is possibly Townsville's most carbon-efficient commercial building – a carbon-crunching machine.

The award-winning Queensland company has converted an old warehouse in Garbutt into new eco-friendly headquarters.

The builders have gone solar, installing the city's first three-phase solar power station.

SEA Q5 sustainability and green-building consultant Guy Lanz said the builders were "walking the talk" on sustainable development when they drew up the plans.

"This building is probably the most carbon-efficient commercial building in Townsville," Mr Lanz said.

"The ground floor consists of a big, small office, storage space and tenancy offices.

"There is a drafting area and a boardroom on the mezzanine level. Features to keep the building energy-efficient include a white roof to reflect heat, motion sensors and timers on lights and air conditioners, tank lighting at each desk, skylights and energy-efficient fluorescent tubes.

"Rainwater is collected for flushing the toilets, washing cars and watering the garden – and there is a waterfall urn in the men's loos."

The building even has its own solar power station to provide up to 10per cent of the building's electricity.

"Producing their own solar renewable energy complements the building's very low mains energy consumption," Mr Lanz said.

The solar power station was designed by Bunloc solar power system designer Steve Winter, electrical engineer Graham Drennan from Attthurber Francis and Mr Lane from SEA Q5.

Mr Winter said the project was the largest grid connect solar system his firm had developed.

Hutchinson Builders project manager Ben Prent said the solar power station was a big plus for their new Townsville headquarters.

"It shows what can be achieved with off-the-shelf technology and local expertise," Mr Prent said.

"It also helps develop capacity in sustainable design for the firm.

"Mr Lane said the company was considering buying 100 percent green-power mains electricity."

"This would result in the building having zero greenhouse emissions associated with electricity consumption."

Carbon clearout as builders go green

Sedgman signs $23m coal deal

Sedgman services company Sedgman Ltd announced yesterday its first major overseas coal deal with the Tasmanian government.

The joint venture design contract with Tasmanian resources giant CVRD, for its Mongolian project in Mozambique.

Sedgman managing director Peter Hay said the multi-billion-dollar Mozambique project had the potential to be one of Africa's biggest coal mines and represented a significant step in the company's global expansion.

He said Sedgman would be undertaking the detailed design and documentation of a 6900 tonne an hour process plant at the project site.

Sedgman would undertake all major mining and preparation plants in the world.

Sedgman also has a $20m contract to build a coal-fired power station in New Zealand.

PBL Mac casino

A JOINT $30 million bid by Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd and Macquarie Group Ltd for the Chadstone Gateway Casino Income Fund has succeeded.

The joint venture said it had received enough acceptances for the takeover to become uncontentious and the group would now consider the remaining units.

Industrial lease property of the week

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