

**Project
expected to
create jobs
and boost
economy**

\$628M RIVER PLAN

By CATH FOURACRE

FIVE years of hard work have paid off with the recommendation this week from the Queensland coordinator-general for a marina and business development on the Caboolture River.

North Harbour, which will be bigger than Sanctuary Cove, will transform degraded former pine plantation and cane land into a \$628 million residential and business park precinct that includes a marina, golf course and conservation areas.

It is on the eastern side of the highway and south of the Caboolture River.

This is the shot in the arm the local economy has been waiting for as it is anticipated there will be 1500 jobs during construction and 13,600 full-time positions in the completed development.

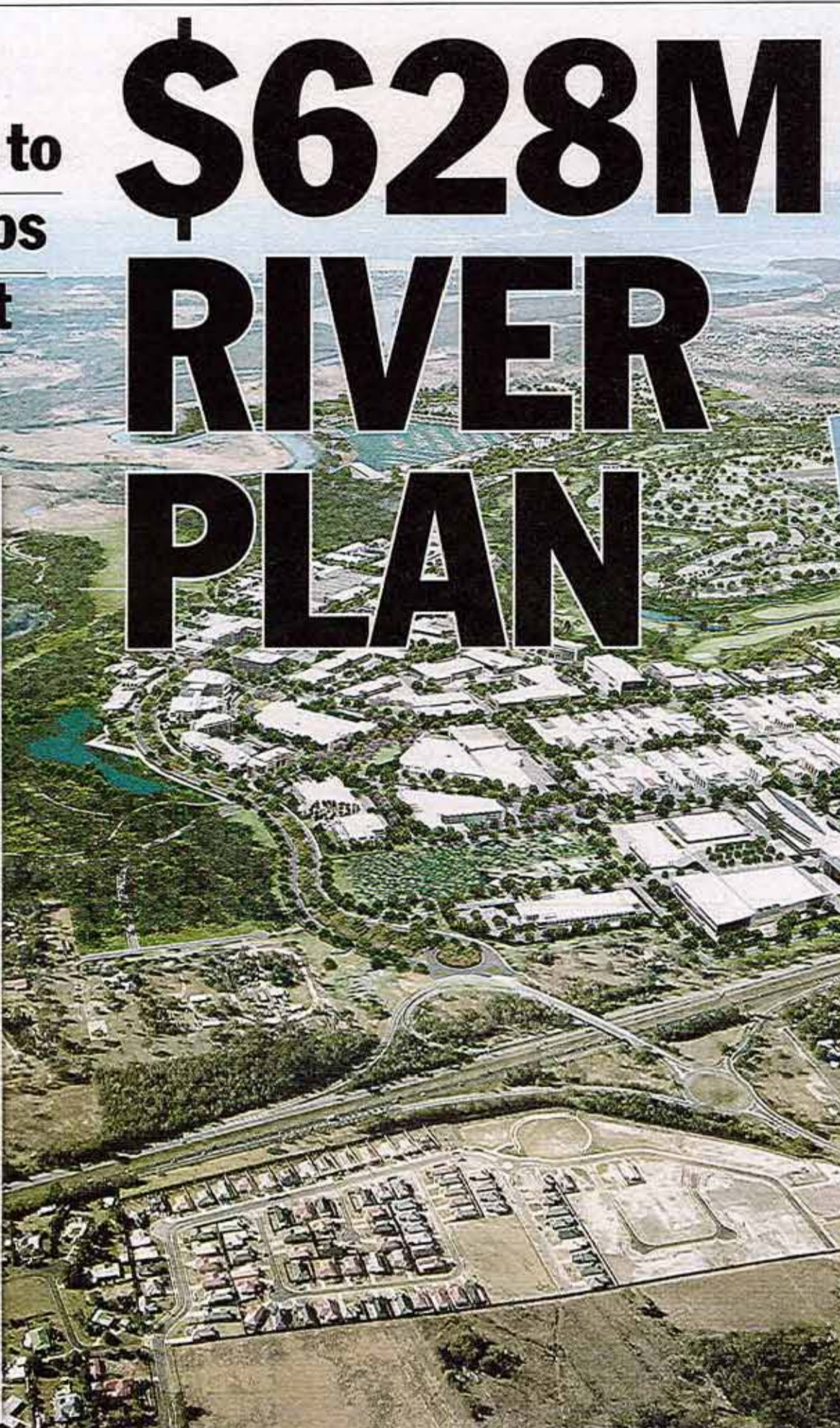
Chief executive Jeff Smith said it was not difficult to decide to bring this project to the Caboolture region.

"Our company certainly saw the opportunities in this region," he said.

The coordinator-general's recommendation follows an exhaustive environmental impact study and extensive community consultation and comes five years after the developer, North-east Business Park Pty Ltd, first lodged its development application.

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ON TRACK: North-east Business Park's North Harbour project has taken a big step towards becoming a reality. *Photo: Contributed*



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North Harbour bigger than Sanctuary Cove

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THE recommendation considered the overall benefit of the master-planned community in terms of jobs, provision of housing, and environmental improvements to the badly degraded site.

The company now plans to lodge applications with Moreton Bay Regional Council to enable construction on the first stage early next year. It plans to start with the development of small lot business premises.

Mr Smith said there was already strong interest.

The site, adjacent to the Bruce Highway and eight kilometres upstream from Moreton Bay, enjoys a nine kilometre river frontage that makes it an ideal location for the marine industry.

"We have a number of local and regional businesses, including boat builders, who have already expressed interest in being among the first to move in," Mr Smith said.

"This approval is the result of five years of hard work and we're delighted to now be moving forward," he said.

Mr Smith said the project

would deliver economic diversification by providing higher skilled jobs, attractive living and working environments and lifestyle opportunities in line with the requirements of the South East Queensland Regional Plan. The master plan includes the development of 160 hectares of business park land and more than 150 hectares of mixed density residential development. Almost half of the site would be set aside as open space with environmental buffer zones and active and passive recreation areas. Significant marine works are pro-

posed, including construction of a marina and dredging of the navigation channel, in the lower reaches of the Caboolture River.

An environmental impact study has shown the project is also set to deliver a significant improvement to the Caboolture River with better control of stormwater, reducing turbidity and excess nutrients in the water.

The study has shown the river is badly degraded with high levels of phosphorous and nitrogen from agricultural runoff.



SUPPORTIVE: Moreton Bay Central Chamber president Michael Kennedy, CBD Traders president Terry Gollant and Commerce Caboolture chamber president Adam Leishman.

Project is supported

PORT Binnli chief executive office Jeff Smith said he was delighted that since the first announcement of the North Harbour development five years ago, the business community had embraced the project.

Commerce Caboolture president Adam Leishman welcomed the announcement, saying North Harbour would deliver much-needed jobs and investment to the area.

"This is a fantastic project and the local business community is excited by the opportunities and very positive profile the project will deliver for the region," he said.

CBD Traders president Terry Gollant said the project was needed for the region to provide jobs for the future to stop the migration of young people from the region.

Moreton Central chamber president

Michael Kennedy said it was a great decision by the state government on three counts - it was good for the environment, for the community and for local business. CADET's Greg Poultney said CADET was the lead agency for employment and training for the business park.

"We will run a series of training and employment programs as the development rolls out, based on the skills that are needed," he said.

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