

\$1b Coomera Town Centre gets nod

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January 27th, 2009

AFTER more than a decade of planning and controversy, the billion-dollar Coomera Town Centre has been given the green light, with the State Government signing off on the Gold Coast City Council master plan.

The purpose-built retail, residential and commercial hub will have the Coomera rail station at its centre and is expected to eventually create 20,000 jobs and 10,500 new homes over the next 15 years.

A north-south boulevard connecting the centre with the Dreamworld theme park will become the main street of the pedestrian-friendly development, to include a library, swimming pool, community and government services. The Government is also considering a proposal to double the size of the neighbouring marine precinct, potentially generating an extra 1000 jobs.

Deputy Premier and Infrastructure Minister Paul Lucas signed off on the city council's structure plan for Coomera town centre.

"This is a plan to create a new community at Coomera, providing thousands of jobs and injecting money into the local economy," he said yesterday. "In time, the Coomera Town Centre will become a destination in its own right and the city council expects about 20,000 people will work there by 2026.

"This will be a transit-oriented community, with about 10,500 dwellings supported by retail, tourism and commercial uses.

"The plan is designed to help protect the local environment with an open space corridor to preserve the ecological value and scenic beauty of Oakey Creek, which frames the town centre."

He said the town centre would offer a range of dwellings, from detached houses to units, to encourage diversity and affordability.

Residential densities will be highest in the areas nearest to the transport hub, to gain the maximum use of public transport.

"Thanks to QR's upgrade of the Brisbane-Gold Coast Rail Line, including a second track from Ormeau to Coomera, train services on this route are more frequent and comfortable," said Mr Lucas.

The proposed town centre is also close to the Gold Coast international marine precinct on the Coomera River.

"The Co-Coordinator-General is currently considering a proposal to double the marine precinct's size, which would potentially generate an extra 1000 jobs in the area," he said.

"My endorsement of the structure plan is the first step towards realising the homes and jobs planned for Coomera town centre.

"The structure plan will now be incorporated into the Gold Coast City Council's planning scheme, enabling development applications to be lodged."

Albert MP Margaret Keech said the plan established the broad layout, land use mix, and infrastructure requirements for a 667ha site.

"Initial development will occur around the rail station, which will be part of a transport hub that will also cater to buses, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians," she said.

"The wider town centre will include medium to high-density residential dwellings, education, health and community services, low-impact industry, green space and recreation areas."

Sustainable City Future Committee chairman Peter Young said the Government's approval of the plan should end the controversial long-term claims and counter-claims between landholders about where the town centre should be located.