



50 RV spaces at airport

Maryborough takes significant step toward achieving RV friendly status

Carlie Walker

MARYBOROUGH has taken a major step towards becoming RV friendly, with up to 50 new low-cost RV camping spaces set to become available at Maryborough Airport in the new year.

Doonville Football Club was awarded the tender to operate the airport site on behalf of the Fraser Coast Regional Council, which voted in favour of allowing more RV camping sites in the central business district and other parts of the city earlier this year.

Cr Paul Truscott, who led the charge to change the council's RV strategy, said the decision to award the club with the contract was a positive step towards giving Maryborough the status of an official RV friendly town.

"This is a big step that makes more RV spaces available to attract travellers into Maryborough and the Fraser Coast," he said.

A spokeswoman from the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia said while Maryborough did not have the status yet, the council had lodged an application to be an RV friendly town. She said the club was waiting for information concerning the sites available for travellers

and it was likely the city would achieve RV friendly status early next year.

Cr Truscott said he was pleased to see the tender

process be completed and he was looking forward to seeing the Doonville Football Club help to attract travellers to the region.

"The club provided a number of valid points that made their application stand out," he said.

Cr Truscott said the

council's planning scheme allowed for up to 50 travellers to stay at the airport, but it would ultimately be up to Doonville Football Club to determine how many they were able to service at the site.

He said it was yet to be determined when travellers would be able to start staying at the airport.

"The club will be working on that and leave details to be finalised."



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GET READY: HERE COMES THE BOOM

Bundaberg is on the cusp on major growth, with For the first time we have been recognised as the sugar industry has recorded a record year. It's

our tourism and business community thriving, number one producer of macadamias, and our time to get excited about what's to come



ASHLEY CLARK
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IN A major coup, Bundaberg has secured an event that will bring millions to the economy and create national exposure for the region.

Next October more than 1000 visitors will roll into

Bundaberg for the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) national rally at the Bundaberg Recreational Precinct.

Mayor Jack Dempsey said he had spoken with rally organisers while in Canberra earlier this year and they had agreed to

consider the Bundaberg region as a location for their national rally.

"This is a huge win for the Bundaberg region. CMCA has a membership of 66,000 and the rally is expected to attract about 1100 motorhome owners to Bundaberg.

"This equates to around



1800 people who will be staying at the Recreational Precinct for a week. At this stage the event is tentatively booked for October 9 to 16.

CMCA Rally organiser Paul Scully said the Queensland rallies invariably attracted strong support mainly due to the excellent weather.

“Although the week-long rally is the focal point, you will find that numerous members opt to visit the region before, during and after the rally.

“The economic impact for the Bundaberg region is huge with easily a couple of million dollars injected into the local economy.”

Mr Scully said the CMCA members were treated to a variety of events during the week including trade shows, seminars, craft courses and tours of the Bundaberg

region.

“We supply mini-buses to transport our members to shopping and dining areas but are reliant on local tour operators to get our members out to the local attractions. We are currently in discussions with the local tourism body to plan ahead for the

October event.

“During the rally, we normally have an open day where we open the rally venue to visitors who may like to engage with motorhome owners to find out first-hand what life on the road in a motorhome is really like.

Cr Dempsey said securing the rally was a real achievement for Bundaberg.

“Council encourages all local businesses to get in touch with the CMCA (0403 026 488) to make them aware of the products, services, events and

attractions that are available for rally attendees during their visit.



Cr Virginia Black, Mayor Andrew Hope, VIC Manager Nikki Robertson, Deputy Mayor Doug Hawkins, Tom Smith (Caravan Club of Australia) and LPSC GM Ron Van Katwyk.

Freedom to camp in Shire

MAYOR of Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Councillor Andrew Hope, has joined with fellow Councillors and the wider Currabubula Community, plus a representative of the Australian Caravan Club (ACC) to officially open the Currabubula Freedom Camping Area at the Recreation Grounds.

“The opening of the Currabubula Freedom Camping

Ground further strengthens LPSC’s Recreational Vehicle (RV) Strategy,” Councillor Hope said.

“Caravans, mobile homes and campers can stay for up to 72 hours at a facility that provides hot showers and toilets.

“Of course this provides additional opportunities for businesses in Currabubula and local economic develop-

ment,” he said.

Councillor Hope told the gathering that Council’s RV strategy was already paying dividends for the Shire as a whole.

“We recently posted a short video clip of the Willow Tree facility on Council’s Facebook Page and it has been viewed by over 15,000 people,” Councillor Hope said.



Masterplan reveals transformation for cyclone-battered Port Hinchinbrook

\$450m resort revival

CHRISTIE ANDERSON

CYCLONE-battered Port Hinchinbrook will be transformed into a world-class tourism destination under bold plans to build a new resort, caravan park, water park and fishing village.

Details of the revamp are revealed in a masterplan for the \$450 million development, rebranded Hinchinbrook Harbour, which has been unveiled to residents.

New owners The Passage Holdings plan to start construction next year, with the redevelopment to be completed over the next 10 years. The fishing village will be geared towards the international market, the resort and water park will cater to families while there will be a 300-site motorhome park, campground, backpacker accommodation and new marina.

Real estate agent for The Passage Holdings, Bruce Goddard of Place Projects, said the new owners had financing behind them while some parts of the redevelopment would be sold to private operators.

"There are well-heeled people involved in this project," Mr Goddard said.

"The caravan site will be sold ... and the fishing village site will be purchased by a fishing operator to develop that and run in their own right. We already have a verbal agreement for the fishing village."

The project is expected to create more than 3000 jobs with \$4 million already spent on restoring the resort, which was severely damaged by cyclone Yasi in 2011, and creating the masterplan.

The first stage will include accommodation facilities including a 4.5-star resort and 12 marina-front villas. The waterfront restaurant will be open by Christmas and trade as a BYO establishment until a liquor licence is finalised.

Mr Goddard said the restaurant would be able to seat more than 200 people and serve a

diverse menu including seafood. "All the physical works are complete but we are still working through the liquor licencing process which should be finalised by March, allowing the bar to reopen" he said.

Bulldozers have been brought in to prepare the settlement ponds to dredge the clogged marina and grand canal. Dredging is expected to start in February and take 18

months, resulting in high tide access being restored.

Earlier this week stakeholders, including The Passage Holdings chief executive David Haubert, met residents during three days of community consultation.

Hinchinbrook MP Andrew Cripps said he had been reassured by the developers that access to the public boat ramp would be maintained, the sewerage

plant was operational and dredging would occur.

"The people of the Cardwell district are all hoping this is the start of a revival for development but there has been a lot of promises made in the past and starts and stops. There is a lot scepticism in the community," Mr Cripps said.

"One of the things I'm very confident about is that we can develop the tourism products

to make Hinchinbrook Harbour a great destination and Cardwell a great destination because we have some of the best natural assets in the region."

The Port Hinchinbrook resort began to decline during the global financial crisis before cyclone Yasi caused extensive damage, sending then owners Williams Corporation into liquidation.





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TRANSFORMATION: The Hinchinbrook Harbour masterplan shows a glimpse of how the project could look and (centre) a map of plans for the new marina.

