



Maroochydoore will be

Alicia Butwell looks over the master plan of the new CBD

BRISBANE has one, the Gold Coast has one, even Ipswich has one. But whether or not our Sunshine Coast has one is a topic that usually incites some debate.

I'm talking about a town centre or a central hub that attracts businesses, shoppers and diners alike.

Nambour was originally developed as the Coast's main town back in the 1890s with a railway, school, church, sugar mill, police station, court house and town hall.

Yet, over time, people were attracted by the white sandy beaches.

Populations increased dramatically in the seaside villages of Maroochydoore, Mooloolaba and Caloundra and they became major tourist destinations.

Tourism then boosted business numbers and soon the villages, which each had their own separate identities, became business hubs in their own right.

There has been uncertainty as to where the Sunshine Coast's official town centre is, but Sunshine Coast Regional Council is working to alleviate that problem.

Currently Council considers our town centre as the business and retail precincts surrounding Maroochydoore's Horton Parade, Cornmeal Parade, Ocean Street, First Avenue and Duporth Avenue.

And with their adoption of the Maroochydoore Principal Activity Centre (PAC) Structure Plan, it reaffirms Council's commitment to making Maroochydoore the Coast's central business hub.

The planned and much publicised central business district (CBD) is proposed for the area where Horton Park Golf Course currently resides, although acquisition of the land is yet to be settled.

Strategy and planning portfolio councillor Russell Green said the Maroochydoore CBD "will create opportunities for our community, diversify the economy and

help to realise our region's potential".

But what exactly is headed for the new CBD?

A community centre with a regional library and regional arts centre is proposed as well as a much anticipated transit centre, a civic plaza and central park, nightclub and entertainment districts.

Council has divided the planned area into 11 precincts ranging from retail to residential and division four council member for Maroochydoore, Chris Thompson, said the initial works were due for commencement as early as next month.

The Dalton Drive West Precinct (2) is where Dalton Drive has been extended and is due to link up with Maroochy Boulevard.

"That precinct is very exciting and work will start in February on the completion of Dalton Drive, which is classified mixed use, so there's going to be a mix of retail and residential along there," Chris said.

The residential development in that precinct will be

New CBD lures Sunshine Cove residents

WITH Maroochydoore set to evolve into the Coast's leading business and retail districts, population is also destined to increase.

To cater for the expected increase, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council has approved residential development as part of their Maroochydoore Principal Activity Centre Master Plan, and the Maroochy Boulevard precinct is the first to get underway.

Sunshine Cove is located on 106 hectares and offers lakes and parklands for its residents who can purchase land lots up to 800sq m or as little as 200sq m.

Rob Oliver bought a 268sq m block of land and is building a two-storey home which will even boast a pool in the back yard.

But despite the small land lot, Rob was pleased with his decision to build in Maroochydoore over other estates on the Sunshine Coast, as he saw the potential of its proximity

and the future development of Horton Park Golf Course.

"The proposed CBD was a big part of the decision, with the transit centre coming in, we thought it was a good long term investment," Rob said.

"It's so central to everything and people will probably only realise it after all the development has happened, 2031 will come around quick enough, I've been working on the Coast for over 20 years now and it has come around very quickly," he added.

"From Sunshine Cove you can get onto the Motorway really easily and can go either way and reduce travel time," Rob said.

Rob and his wife hope to have their home completed early this year, but rain has slowed the progress of the build.

"I'm hoping it will be finished by early March," he said.

"I'm hoping earlier but I think we're going to get rain. We're putting a pool in and an outdoor living area, so it will have 278sq m of house including the outdoor living area with a back yard, courtyard area and garage."

Penny Service of Sunshine Cove said the estate and its lot sizes were indicative of Maroochydoore's growth and potential.

"I think it's all complementary to the whole of the Coast, there are definitely people who are purchasing now because they see the potential, but there are people who are just after that style of living and are happy with the type of land that it is and the location, so it's a bit of everything, but I think the CBD is a calling card for Maroochydoore and it's a real great thing.

"It's reflective of living in the middle of a city so it is quite urban but peaceful at the same time, it's surprising how quiet it is, but it is the city of Maroochydoore," Penny said.



AT HOME: Anna and Rob Oliver are the first to build in Amity Avenue, Maroochydoore.



vibrant hub for Coast

limited to just four storeys and high rise was not considered an option.

The other side of Dalton Drive's West precinct is Maroochy Boulevard (8) which is home to the new Sunshine Cove development and the Harvey Norman site.

"There's a Mazda dealership going in there also, so that precinct will be classified as showroom, with some retail and commercial use," Chris said.

While some precincts are already developed and will remain unchanged, others are earmarked for an image overhaul.

"With the Aerodrome Road precinct (4), what we've tried to do through this plan is work out some incentive for people to invest in those commercial shops so they'll have the ability to renew the area and amalgamate, and maybe go up to three or four storeys.

"Then we would have more retail floor space for example, because Aerodrome Road is a key gateway into the CBD and it looks pretty old and tired at the moment," Chris explained.

It is the golf course space (11) that would have the most significant impact on the development of the CBD.

The greens have been divided into seven sub-precincts which will form the primary CBD.

The sub-precincts are comprised of a central park, a community space for the library and arts facilities, retail, residential, civic plaza, transit plaza and commercial areas.

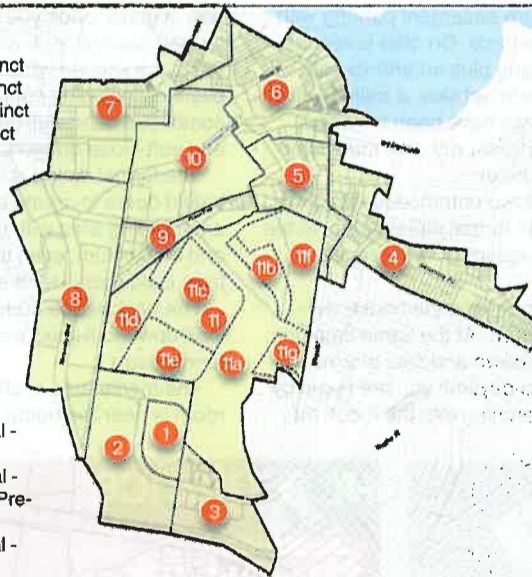
"The retail sub-precinct will be made up of non-department stores, so they will be active street frontages where you'll have retail at one level and residential above. There'll be a mix of uses including a community space precinct which is earmarked for the arts and exhibition centre and a number of restaurants with al fresco dining," Chris explained.

"There'll be a specific precinct for nightclubs in that area so there'll be an entertainment precinct as well.

"There'll be improvements and extensions to the water canal and existing waterways extending all the way through the course and bordered by open space on either side.

Key

1. State Government Precinct
2. Dalton Drive West Precinct
3. Dalton Drive South Precinct
4. Aerodrome Road Precinct
5. Government Precinct
6. Ocean Street Precinct
7. Maroochydore North Precinct
8. Maroochy Boulevard Precinct
9. Plaza Parade Precinct
10. Sunshine Plaza Precinct (Master Plan Unit)
11. Maroochydore Central Precinct (Master Plan Unit)
 - 11a. Maroochydore Central - Parkland Sub-Precinct
 - 11b. Maroochydore Central - Community Facilities Sub-Precinct
 - 11c. Maroochydore Central - Retail Sub-Precinct
 - 11d. Maroochydore Central - Commercial Sub-Precinct
 - 11e. Maroochydore Central - Main Street South Sub-Precinct
 - 11f. Maroochydore Central - Main Street North Parking Sub-Precinct
 - 11g. Maroochydore Central - Residential Sub-Precinct



redevelopment will blend retail, office, residential, recreation, food and dining all within an environment that inspires and captivates people."

Chris Thompson said one of the aims of the council and particularly his own vision for Maroochydore was to have a pedestrian bridge linking the Big Top precinct with the Sunshine Plaza precinct.

"That's one of the things we want to try and marry into development if it happens on the Big Top site - certainly pedestrian connectivity across Cornmeal Creek will be essential, because eventually we'll have that courthouse car park opened up as a plaza area, and I hope to link it right through to the open space in the golf course, so it will be enormous," Chris said.

The estimated completion date of Maroochydore's CBD and PAC is not for another 20 years, but council assures Domain that its planning won't be considered outdated by 2031.

"Ninety per cent will be driven by private investment, so it really depends on the economics of the time.

"Council can only do so much such as prepare the land, build the infrastructure and get the land to the market, but at the end of the day we still need the investors and developers and they in turn need to be funded," Chris said.

He said Council was pleased with the interest they had received so far regarding the development of Maroochydore, particularly with the Harvey Norman site and Sunshine Cove.

"There has been significant private investment already in the Maroochydore CBD precinct, but you would be a couple of years away of putting land on the market in the golf course area I would say."

The feedback from locals in the Maroochydore area has focused on concerns of high-rise buildings, roads and the impact it will have on property.

"I think there's mixed views, I think they're looking forward to some aspects but not others, they realise some of this will mean huge increases in population in their local neighbourhood but at the same time it offers a range of conveniences, and one of the things I often hear is that they want David Jones," Chris said.

“There has been uncertainty as to where the Coast's official town centre is”

"That should be good because I've really fought to try and get as much open space as possible so we can create this great central park area for all the community," Chris said.

The other precincts surrounding the proposed CBD are those currently established such as the Sunshine Plaza (10), Plaza Parade (9) and Big Top precincts (6).

The future of the Big Top seemed bleak last year as media reports suggested it was on the market, yet current owners, Reed Property Group claim to have lodged a development application in accordance with the Maroochydore PAC.

Reed's website describes the application as "a mixed use, modern and vibrant precinct ... the Big Top