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AUTUMN 2017

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CURTIN RAISER LIFTS UNI'S SIGHTS

The university has an enterprising plan to stamp its mark as an innovative urban space to stand the test of time

BY ROBYN MOLLOY

Curtin University is undergoing a major revamp that will cast it not only as an innovative university, but a significant landmark in Perth's south eastern suburbs.

So ambitious is the plan — called Greater Curtin — that Project General Manager Tim Urquhart puts it up there with the likes of Boston, Cambridge and Oxford universities.

"These models have stood the test of time. You go to any of those places and you don't know where the university starts and stops, you're actually just in the middle of that beautiful village or urban environment," he says.

"That's ideally what Curtin will become, so it's not just a campus — it's a place for the community."

"I like to think it is absolutely about creating a new piece of the Perth city, a very urban environment. Ideally, I see it as potentially the new urban heart of Bentley. It will be very exciting."

Stage 1 of Greater Curtin is underway. It will see 3ha on the northern part of the campus transformed into an urbanised and integrated precinct. Known as a Superlot, it might be a small part of the 114-hectare campus, but with an end value of up to \$500m, it will pack a lot in.

Accommodation for up to 2000 students, a serviced apartment-style hotel with more than 50 rooms, 5000sqm of retail space, a new academic building, faculty headquarters and car parking. This is in addition to a bus interchange and public spaces, which will form part of the development, but fall outside the project area.

Comparing it with Elizabeth Quay, Kings Square and Waterbank in East Perth, Urquhart says the precinct-based development is seeking a consortium to raise the finance, create the development value, undertake the construction, manage the asset and, in part, operate some of the buildings as student accommodation.

It's the first time the university

has outsourced to a third party rather than completing the works in-house.

Proponents have been shortlisted and are a combination of local, national and international firms with offices in Australia. Ninety per cent of them have representation in WA.

Urquhart says procurement should be finalised by the end of the year, with a deal to be executed by early next year and construction set to begin in the latter months of 2018.

Construction should then move at a cracking pace with 75 per cent of construction delivered within 12 months. Students are eager, with immediate demand for 900 student beds.

"Subsequent to that, the other 25 per cent would flow," he said.

It comes on the back of more than \$100m worth of construction completed in 2016, including the five-storey Curtin Medical School — built by Georgiou — and the three-storey Agriculture Research Facility, built by Doric.

"Greater Curtin Stage 1 is

about how we are procuring private sector participation to develop, fund, construct and operate the Stage 1 location up in the northern part of the precinct. That will bring third party finance to the table," he says.

"As always we are looking for businesses who may have a stronger desire to be involved with the university. For example, we have a very strong relationship with Cisco and we have the Internet of Everything Innovation Centre, which is a collaborative business space.

"There is great opportunity if you have good ideas but it is about coming to the table and being prepared to risk your time as well. It's not just about the university paying for that because you'll get the benefits of co-branding. I'm happy to have people come to the table, but they have to be prepared to stump up, like we do."

Urquhart says Greater Curtin will eventually see the entire campus transformed, but how quickly that happens will depend of the variables, like the

possibility of light rail.

"Greater Curtin is about the revitalisation of the whole campus, so it's not just new development, obviously within the existing buildings some of them are coming to the end of their life so they'll be retired and either redeveloped or re-imagined in some other form," he says.

"Stage 1 is specifically new development. It is just that 3ha is worth half a billion dollars. It's not an insignificant quantum, but there could be further stages that roll out directly adjacent to Stage 1, which haven't been called Stage 2 yet, depending on how that works."

Accommodation will also be offered on campus rather than on the periphery of the university.

"This is really about how we bring that accommodation right into the middle of the campus, and have it together with teaching and research. It becomes an urbanised piece of campus."

"We're trying to create those real attractive vibrant urban

places underpinned by university but broader appeal in terms of what they provide for people in South Perth and Bentley."

He says the area is underserved for short-term accommodation.

"Most people tend to stay in the CBD. It will be quite modest, it's not like we are talking hundreds of rooms, it might be 50-plus rooms, but it is hotel style."

Urquhart said the campus will be highly-urbanised by 2031 as it adapts to the changing face of education and what students want.

"Previously it was all about the course. These days it's all about the student experience; how they're interacting, what are future employment opportunities, how are they business ready, how are they collaborating with creative thinkers — all those sorts of things are how universities are trying to put themselves in a place for the 21st Century."

"Curtin University is the biggest employer in Perth with

4000 people. It has about a \$1b turnover per annum, covering teaching, research, education and professional services.

WA via Perth CBD.

"If light rail comes back on the agenda we have been future proofed around that, and have

“THE CAMPUS WILL BE HIGHLY-URBANISED BY 2031 AS IT ADAPTS TO THE CHANGING FACE OF EDUCATION”

"Tertiary education is the third biggest sector in the Australian economy so that in its own right says it's hugely important in terms of what it generates and the employment opportunities it creates."

Light rail would be a boon for development, Urquhart says. Progress of the entire Greater Curtin plan would hit top speed should light rail re-emerge as a State priority.

The previously proposed 'knowledge arc' would link Curtin University to the University of

designed for the light rail corridor and we have the land where the rolling stock can actually position itself overnight, so that is there for the knowledge arc," he says.

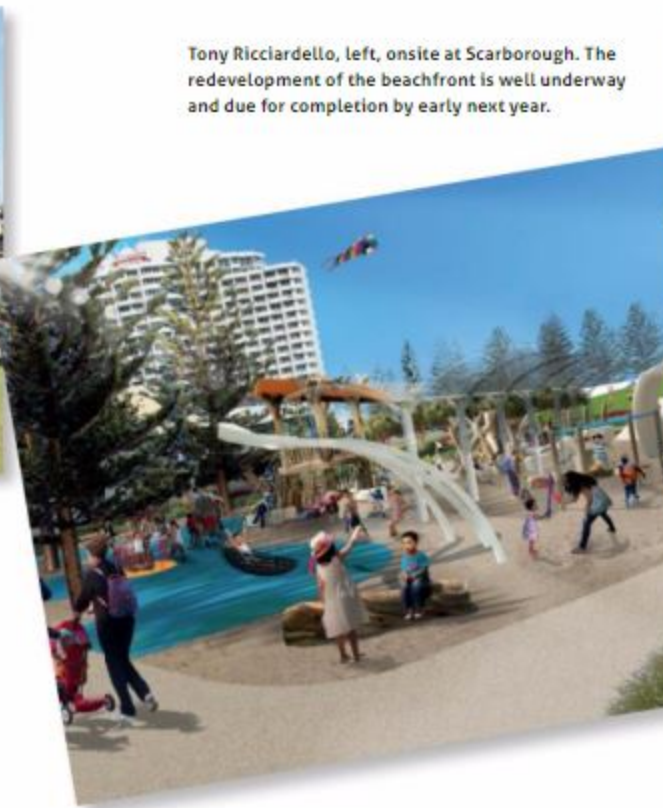
"That would be a game changer in its own right if that came to fruition in the next 10 years."

"It is about the accessibility. All of a sudden it becomes easier, and from a commercial point of view it becomes more attractive with that form of public transport, so there is a much greater desirability for businesses to set up in these locations." ■



The \$49m Curtin Medical school was opened by then Premier Colin Barnett in February. Photo: Douglas Marcus Black

LIFE'S A BEACH



The long-awaited rebirth of Scarborough will breathe new life into an ageing and under-utilised Perth precinct

BY TONY BARRASS

It's been 60 years since those wild and crazy kids stomped their summers away at the legendary Snake Pit, but a new energy has again engulfed Scarborough as it evolves from tired seaside suburb to world-class tourism precinct.

A \$100 million beachfront revitalisation is now in full swing, with construction on a range of new features set to transform this iconic beach into one of Australia's favourite beachfront destinations.

By early 2018, Scarborough Beach will boast an engaging coastal hub that showcases people-friendly boulevards, a new surf life-saving club, a skate park, playground areas and public open spaces that will stretch from Brighton Road in the south to the northern tip of Scarborough Beach.

The redevelopment will be finished in time for Scarborough to once again host "The Aussies", the 2018 Australian Surf Life Saving championships.

The driver for change has been a strong vision led by the State Government and the City

of Stirling. Having successfully completed the forward works contract in 2016, one of WA's most respected builders, the Georgiou Group, has been recently appointed as Head Contractor for the project.

Construction Manager Tony Ricciardello said the company was eagerly embracing the complexities and "unique challenges" the project presented.

"Some of the challenges we face on this project surround working in coastal conditions, undertaking major roadworks and construction in a constrained and high traffic environment and working with our stakeholders to achieve integrated outcomes," he told WA Works.

"However, these are challenges we've faced before on the Elizabeth Quay Forward Works project and challenges that we have successfully overcome.

"In terms of delivery, we will be simultaneously delivering a split-level promenade, integrating facilities and services into these levels and upgrading all roads, footpaths and walkways to improve access between the beachfront and the beach."

Talking from Georgiou's Osborne Park office, Ricciardello said that while he believed the redevelopment would eventually "look fantastic", he was especially anticipating the "intergenerational plaza", which would be a key aspect of the project.

“BY EARLY 2018, SCARBOROUGH BEACH WILL BOAST AN ENGAGING COASTAL HUB”

"I think that's what they'll judge us on," he said. "I am also looking forward to seeing the custom arbor design brought to life. These structures are sure to become a focal point of Scarborough, welcoming visitors to the beachfront and providing respite from the sun."

The project has had unprecedented public input. More than 3000 community members took part in an online survey by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority (MRA) about what they wanted for

Scarborough — not just the beachfront — and how they viewed the future of this iconic beach. MRA's final Master Plan proposes four new destinations for the beachfront set around the existing amphitheatre; Scarborough Square, Sunset

Hill, Scarborough Clock Tower and the Beach Hub. Sunset Hill opened in late 2016 and quickly become a popular vantage point for locals. The master plan has also taken into consideration issues such as building setbacks, parking capacity and pedestrian movements and sets a basis for future development and investment.

Scarborough Square will be at the heart of the beachfront with a pedestrian-friendly, piazza atmosphere boasting a mix of beachfront cafes, shops, bars

Tony Ricciardello, left, onsite at Scarborough. The redevelopment of the beachfront is well underway and due for completion by early next year.

and markets protected from the prevailing sou'westerly winds.

"We are working at the moment to construct the new transit hub and Scarborough Square which will provide an improved entry to Scarborough," Ricciardello said. "It is a complex part of the construction program and one of the major pieces of work we need to complete so our aim is to make sure these works are completed as quickly and safely as possible to reopen this area and deliver part of the new Scarborough for the local community."

Ricciardello said Sunset Hill, which was created during the forward works contract, has quickly been embraced by the local community, with beachgoers already sunbaking on the elevated lush green grass that flows down to the beach.

"When we created Sunset Hill, we left two areas unlandscaped which has been a point of great curiosity. Over the coming months, we will complete construction of the intergenerational plaza to the south, between the amphitheatre and Sunset Hill, and a striking children's playground to the

north. Those gaps will soon make sense and will be a strong drawcard, particularly for young families."

The Beach Hub is the redevelopment showpiece. It is here the Scarborough Surf Life Saving Club and the City of Stirling's beach services will have their new home.

Located alongside the city's \$26m public swimming pool with a flagship restaurant and bespoke bars, this will be the hero piece of the project *piece de resistance*.

The essence of Scarborough and its rich history of summer nights, surf, sand and fun will be celebrated and given new life through the revitalisation project currently underway.

Ricciardello said it was a great pleasure for Georgiou Group to undertake such visionary projects and be part of the transformation as it unfolds.

"These projects are inherent with challenges; but full of possibility — people love visiting Scarborough and want new reasons to come back, and we look forward to providing a new Scarborough that will be sure to entice." ■

FUTURE-PROOF YOUR BUSINESS

JOHN GEORGIU
CEO, Georgiou Group

In the past 12 months, WA has been riding a wave of economic uncertainty.

While many saw the mining boom peel away, other companies could never imagine the wider impact it would have on their business. In the past six months, a number of long-standing contractors, builders and sub-contractors have gone into administration for a variety of reasons.

So how do other companies avoid the same bleak future?

Georgiou has diversified its business over the last 10 years, which included regional and sector diversification.

In this period, we established our Engineering, Building, Queensland and NSW business units. Adding new territories does not come easy — long-term trust and relationships only come with time and consistent delivery of promises.

During this period, we also grew our resources and oil and gas client base.

The same can be said for our precast business. After establishing Geocrete in the early 1990s, the focus was on standard drainage products.

Today, our precast business is vying to become a substantial producer of Tee-Roff bridge beams in Australia after recently picking up various Main Roads WA-related projects.

What advice do I have to business looking to diversify to ensure their success?

Know your client's drivers: we've grown nationally thanks to our longstanding relationships with clients.

People Development: retain and bring onboard the best people in the industry with a diverse skillset to help your business grow.

Business Planning: this process is integral to the future success of any company.

At the end of the day, know your markets, your clients and your people.

These three elements make up a strong foundation for ongoing success.