

MEDIA RELEASE



BIG BANANA JOINT VENTURE ANNOUNCES NEXT STAGE OF REDEVELOPMENT

The Joint Venture between The Village Building Co. and the Rubie Family, formed to expand and revitalise the Big Banana in Coffs Harbour, today announced that it was completing plans for the next stage of the significant upgrade of this iconic tourist attraction. The Board of The Village Building Co. today resolved to move forward with the planning and design of a Water Park Attraction, an associated Tourist Village and on site tourist accommodation. The total development will see expenditure over five to seven years exceeding \$50M.

Staged completion of the Water Park with a total estimated cost of \$6M will include several body flumes, a six-lane aqua racer, a lazy river tube ride, an aqua play area for younger children, and other facilities. This will more than fill the void left by the closure of the Aquajet.

Planning is being undertaken by Alan Griffith Architects, who have been involved with similar successful attractions on the Gold Coast. This will become an integral part of the recreational infrastructure within the Big Banana. It will cater for residents of the region, tourists dropping in, and tourists holidaying at the Big Banana.

Complementing the Water Park Attraction will be a Tourist Village precinct linking the existing Big Banana attractions with the proposed Water Park. Planning is also underway for tourist accommodation to turn the Big Banana into a destination for family holidays, not just a stop-over for tourists on the way elsewhere.

The Mayor of Coffs Harbour, Councillor Keith Rhoades, strongly welcomed the redevelopment. "Coffs Harbour will benefit greatly from this addition to the wonderful array of existing attractions that the City has to offer, both to tourists and the local population. It will enhance the appeal of Coffs Harbour, which competes with other tourist destinations for both short and long stay visitors, and will help to cement Coffs as a major tourist hub. This will directly benefit local business and help generate additional jobs for the local community."

The CEO for The Village Building Co., Mr Bob Winnel stated that the Board of Directors had great confidence in the future of Coffs Harbour and its continued growth as both a tourist destination and a desirable place to live. He added that, "We hope to commence work on site on the Water Park Attraction by September this year. A temporary three storey high inflatable water slide will be installed, pending completion of the permanent structures over the next eighteen months."

Further information contact: Mr Bob Winnel 02 6241 7419 / 0404 891 140
Mayor Keith Rhoades 0408 256 405