

SE CommercialProperty
HD **Metro looks to future**
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WC 364 words
PD 12 September 2014
SN Courier Mail
SC COUMAI
ED CourierMail
PG 71
LA English
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DAVID Devine's Metro **Property Group** will boost its already bulging pipeline of **apartment** projects with the **purchase** of a Bowen Hills industrial **site**.

Sources say Metro will pay about \$25 million for a 1.56ha **site** at 66-98 Montpelier Rd.

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Executive chairman David Devine said it was a "strategic acquisition" in an area where the **company** had two completed and other **apartment** projects under construction or in planning stages.

"Due to the success that we've had in this area this will ensure future supply," Mr Devine said.

"**Apartment** sales have been significantly higher in the past three months. "So we'll get into this one in 2017." Metro proposes a mixed use development of up to 550 apartments in four or five eight level towers plus 1200sq m of retail fronting Montpelier Rd. A Development application will be lodged early next year and the project will be designed by Woods Bagot.

The deal was negotiated by JLL's Seb Turnbull and Christian Sandstrom. Metro managing director Luke Hartman said it was a "smart play". "It's a strategic midterm land bank and we have the ability to get some passing income," he said.

More than \$1 million in rent is being paid by a variety of tenants. Mr Hartman said Metro had 4782 **apartment** on its books in Brisbane of which 1785 have been **sold**.

"We're very bullish on the Brisbane market," he said.

"We see Brisbane as the place to be in the **apartment** market compared with Sydney and Melbourne due to the price gaps that exist at the moment.

"We have over 1000 units under construction, we will sell a 1000 apartments this year and a 1000 next year." Mr Hartman confirmed the **Chinese**-based R & F **Group** have exchanged contracts to **buy** Metro's TAFE **site** in South Brisbane and its Riverview Towers **site** at Kangaroo Point for a rumoured \$65 million.

He said Metro was also on the hunt for more sites.

"I'm not speaking out of school, but we're very near to another major **transaction**," he said. "There's a lot of confidence out there."

IN i5010022 : Residential Building Construction | i501 : Building Construction | iconst : Construction | icre : Real Estate/Construction
NS ccat : Corporate/Industrial News
RE austr : Australia | brisbn : Brisbane | apacz : Asia Pacific | ausnz : Australia/Oceania | queensl : Queensland

PUB	News Ltd.
AN	Document COUMAI0020140911ea9c00018