

SE News
HD Gold Coast Bulletin EDITORIAL Confidence in the Coast again
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IF reinvention and rejuvenation are cornerstones in the success of the tourism industry, then the Gold Coast economy looks set for a huge lift.

As the Bulletin reports today, Singaporean **hotel** giant Banyan Tree **Group** has paid \$11.5 million for two beachfront blocks in Surfers Paradise and intends building a five-star **hotel** – the first in the city since the global financial crisis rocked the world economy. This is good news for a city that relies so heavily on the tourism and events dollar.

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The Surfers Paradise skyline has taken on a dramatic and pleasing change in recent years with the addition of the Hilton and Soul towers, which were planned before the GFC struck but to their credit, the investors honoured their commitment.

Those projects and this latest announcement by Banyan Tree have been a huge vote of confidence in the Gold Coast's reputation as a major destination, in the city's drawcards that keep visitors coming, and in the city, state and national economies.

What makes this plan to build a major resort-**hotel** in the heart of the tourism capital all the more exciting is the fact it comes hot on the heels of another huge development plan reported by the Bulletin yesterday – a multimillion-dollar resort and lifestyle precinct planned by a **Chinese** developer, known simply as Mr Cao, for the former Star of the Sea Convent **site** at Southport.

The developer's **company**, Xi'an Wen-Hua Industrial Co based in the city of Xi'an – home of the famous Terracotta Warriors that protected a huge necropolis built for the Emperor Qin more than 2000 years ago – is in the process of acquiring the 1.5ha Southport landholding and has lodged an application to turn it into a multi-use precinct featuring highrise towers with shopping and dining areas, offices, education facilities, and resort and permanent-living accommodation.

Observers say Southport's priority development area status should see that development fast-tracked.

People often say a big city's health can be gauged by the number of cranes on the skyline. With these projects and many others approved and in the pipeline, the Gold Coast is in great shape.

Event's not a great way to mend fences TUGUN'S community needs healing, not another beachfront march that is being hailed as a "thank you" event but looks more like a way of rubbing victory in the faces of **property** owners who came off second best in a recent foreshore stoush.

It is also puzzling how anything up to 600 people tramping through the dunes, apparently all the way between Bilinga and Tugun, will not damage the flora and dune structure vital to preserving the stretch of beach and the homes, accommodation houses and **commercial** businesses along Golden Four Drive.

On the one hand the Bulletin supports the Oceanway project that has been a part of this contentious issue.

A pedestrian pathway along the full extent of the city's coastline would be a major asset for locals and tourists, creating one of the world's great "must-do" scenic treks. Importantly, a constructed path would protect the surrounding vegetation.

The paper also supported the case against selling off the public land along the beachfront. But it cannot support continued sniping between the parties involved in this dispute and, given the State Government decided the land would not be **sold**, urges the community to mend fences – as it were – and leave animosities behind instead of dreaming up new excuses to engage in what the rest of the city just sees as provocation.

Friends of Currumbin, along with scores of outsiders who supported the original cause, won the battle when the Government made its decision in February. But the issue had turned ugly, with worrying confrontations between protesters and **property** owners leading police to step in. The city does not need or want a repeat of this.

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