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Tropical Silicon Valley

CAIRNS could become the "Silicon Valley for tropical medicine" with private companies already expressing interest in floor space at the Cairns University Hospital precinct.

Soil on the Cairns North site is not expected to be turned until 2022, but key proponents have revealed the eventual product will likely be a mix of hospital facilities, a James Cook University campus and private industry. Far North MP Craig Crawford said the site could become a research and design hub.

"Cairns could put itself on the map for tropical medicine," he said. "I would expect those big companies to be very interested."

Neither the state government nor JCU wanted to reveal preliminary designs for the 12,331sq m site bounded by Sheridan, Grove, Charles and Digger streets until planning and consultation had been completed.

The land deal was locked in after urgent talks on Wednesday and an agreement between the state government and JCU was signed.

JCU Cairns campus director David Craig said the master plan could be completed within weeks though, featuring potential building locations, green and open spaces and carparking.

He said the process had been expedited after Premier

Annastacia Palaszczuk's visit to Cairns two weeks ago where she issued a stern ultimatum demanding JCU agree to release several of the land parcels after signing the \$10m deal.

"We always thought we were going to get where we are now, but with the Premier's involvement it is moving faster, a little faster, than they were," Mr Craig said.

"It wasn't like we hadn't been talking, it's just that conversations suddenly got elevated when the Premier made her comments then there was convo between JCU, Queensland Health, the Premier and Deputy Premier's offices to link up and to try and bring the process forward so that we could all move forward with the overall project."

He said the inclusion of private industry was vital.

"We've had some approaches already from various parts of the private sector and we'll continue to keep talking to them ...," he said.

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