

Luxury home amid big plans for prime real estate

Esplanade gets ritzy makeover

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THE Cairns Esplanade's swanky revitalisation stretches well beyond a new \$28m outdoor dining precinct as builders swing into action on another luxurious development.

Cairns tourism veterans Greg and Lenore Harbour, who made their business mark as owners of Sugarland Car Rentals, have exciting plans for a prime piece of waterfront real estate just a stone's throw from the fun ship playground.

Construction crews are already hard at work at 265 Esplanade, building what will be fittingly known as Harbour House.

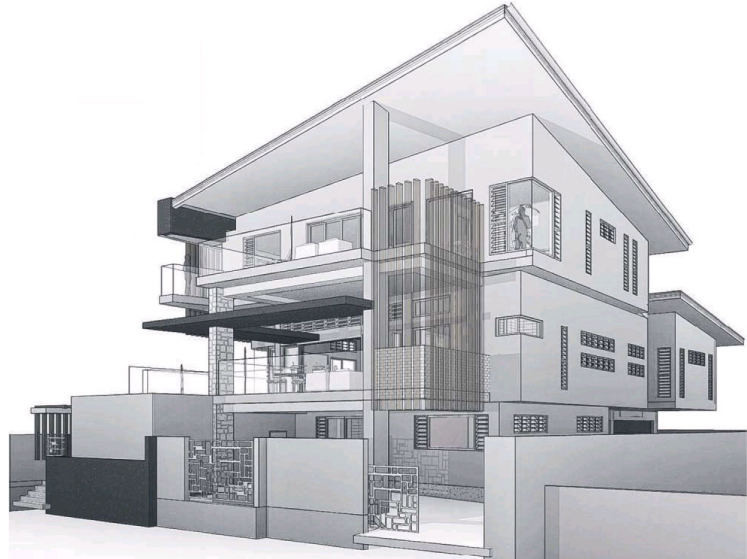
The Harbours bought the 641sq m property for a clean

\$1m in 2007. Back then – and until recently – it had a two-storey, red brick home built in 1986 with a swimming pool, polished timber floors and a decor that heavily featured animal skin floor rugs in real estate advertising photos from the time.

Its replacement will be a much more modern affair with three storeys, five bedrooms, a workshop, office, four-car garage, a swimming pool and a large open-plan kitchen, dining area and lounge.

The top floor will feature an expansive master bedroom with walk-in wardrobe, ensuite, gym, balcony and a special small lookout extending towards the Esplanade.

The Harbours' decision to get cracking on construction



Greg and Lenore Harbour have started construction of a luxurious three-storey home in a prime position at 265 Esplanade in Cairns North. Picture: Supplied

is a vote of confidence in the city's booming property market, which experts say is at its strongest in a decade with building approvals up 35.6 per cent between May and September.

The Esplanade is peppered with properties that have been earmarked for demolition and redevelopment whenever market conditions are right – and the right person is willing to invest.

Brothers John and Michael Deeb have approvals for a new 12-storey apartment tower at 191-193 Esplanade and have placed the property up for sale "by formal offers".

Hong Kong investor Benny Wu has long-term plans to demolish the home of late GP Dr Leslie Westaway at 219 Esplanade, next to his Acacia Court Hotel, for which a partial conversion to an

aged care centre is proposed.

No development applications have yet been lodged for the former Dr Westaway house but Mr Wu has confirmed his plan.

A ritzy 13-storey high-rise unit complex has also been approved for the site of the long established Costa Blanca holiday apartments at 239-245 Esplanade, although it is unclear when construction might begin.