

Trad has faith in projects revival

ALICIA NALLY
alicia.nally@news.com.au

QUEENSLAND Deputy Premier Jackie Trad has confirmed that Far North projects such as the Global Tourism Hub and renovation of the Cairns Convention Centre are needed to boost the region's international competitiveness.

Ms Trad was in Cairns yesterday to inspect initial site-works on the Smithfield bypass.

She said construction would begin with gusto after the next wet season.

"It was clear coming up here this morning that congestion is a significant issue for the people of Cairns," Ms Trad said.

She also said she expected detailed proposals on the Global Tourism Hub project from three contenders to be delivered within a "few months".

"There's a lot of work that goes into those proposals to make sure they look attractive to government.

"In terms of the Cairns Convention Centre, things have been made a little more difficult by the fact there are three pieces of separate work that need to be done and they need to be prepared in terms of not disrupting bookings and activities which are already earmarked.

"That convention centre needs a big uplift if it's going to be competitive on a global scale, but they want to roll it out while still hosting events."

Ms Trad said a business

HUB CONTENDERS

Three major players, including The Star Entertainment Group, Hard Rock International, and the Reef Casino joint venture, have been short-listed by the State Government to take on the \$1 billion waterfront Global Tourism Hub project. Construction of the \$176 million Cairns Convention Centre upgrade and extension is not expected to start until 2020. Public Works Minister Mick de Brenni told the *Cairns Post* last year the business case would be completed by mid-2019.

case on the convention centre was "imminent".

She also said the competitive Australian dollar meant Cairns was still an attractive destination for tourists.

"We're committed to keeping those direct flights coming in. It is a great location for those who want to experience a tropical holiday," she said.

Targeting Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Coalition federal government, Ms Trad also said funding for all kinds of infrastructure would be more forthcoming if Bill Shorten won the election.

She criticised the wait of up to four years for Queensland funding.

@editorial@cairnspost.com.au

facebook.com/TheCairnsPost

www.cairnspost.com.au

twitter.com/TheCairnsPost