

Crystalbrook Collection unveils newest hotel development

CRYSTALBROOK Collection is gushing at the arrival of its newest bundle of joy Kingsley — a five-star little brother for Riley, Bailey and Flynn.

The growing hotel empire owned by Syrian billionaire Ghassan Aboud won a bidding war to buy Newcastle City Council's former "roundhouse" administration centre.

Artist impressions reveal a plan to convert the iconic circular building into a luxury five-star hotel, ready to open in late-2020.

The Crystalbrook hospitality business was born in Cairns, with the \$130 million Riley resort already operating and its siblings Flynn and Bailey to open next year.



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Moves are also underway to completely transform the Port Douglas marina into a world-class superyacht facility with apartments and five and six-star hotels.

There also remains a prime block of land on Grafton St — the former site of the Cairns City Library, currently used as a carpark — with decisions still to be made about its development future.

Crystalbrook CEO Mark Davie said the new hotel's name, Kingsley, was a nod to Newcastle's heritage and its earlier name Kingstown dating back to 1804.

It will be the first five-star hotel Newcastle has ever had.



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“There’s really nothing like this building, it has a strong identity and connection to the city of Newcastle,” Mr Davie said.

“I see a lot of potential.

“We think the location, with the City Hall, the Civic Theatre, the Art Gallery and the War Memorial Cultural Centre right on the doorstep, makes it a perfect location for a five-star hotel.”

Mr Davie said he had been watching Newcastle’s growth in recent years and felt strongly that Crystalbrook Collection should become a contributor to the future growth of the city.

Initial studies indicated the “roundhouse” could accommodate at least 100 five-star rooms.



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Renders developed by Newcastle's Barney Collins of EJE Architecture also show the introduction of a rooftop restaurant and recreational area complete with a swimming pool.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes hailed the landmark deal as a turning point in Newcastle's history.

"Great cities around the world provide truly great accommodation," she said.

"And the mark of a great hotel is one done to a five-star standard.

"Crystalbrook's decision to invest in Newcastle, when they could have invested anywhere in Australia, says so much about our city and how we are viewed by those living interstate and overseas.

"I applaud Crystalbrook's vision in re-imagining the CAC's brutalist architecture."