

Designer has important role

DESIGNERS and developers must share responsibility for the provision of public spaces in urban areas, according to leading architectural practice the Buchan Group.

"Every major city in the world has its great parks, plazas and civic spaces," said principal Gerry Holmes.

"As population densities increase, both the urban designer and the developer have a role to play in ensuring that new developments include places for social interaction and leisure," he said.

"Whether it is a small square within a residential development or a large landscaped area where people can gather in the heart of a city, rich public spaces must be included in the urban master plan and design."

The Buchan Group designed Raptis Group's recently announced Hilton Surfers Paradise on the site of the old Dolphin Arcade and is also the architect for the ANA Hotel redevelopment.

The group's projects include many significant Gold Coast

developments, such as Conrad Jupiters Hotel and Casino, Q1, Nexus Towers, Robina Town Centre extensions and Harbour Town Shopping Centre.

Projects further afield include Vision, Element on Coolum Beach and a host of national and international commercial, mixed use, retail, residential and hotel projects.

Hilton Surfers Paradise senior associate and design architect Todd Crighton said the redevelopment of the Dolphin Arcade site incorporated residential, commercial office, entertainment, dining and retail components in two major towers and would create a memorable landmark.

"When completed, it will play a significant role in the recreation and regeneration of the city centre," he said.

"At ground level, planning for the project focuses on retaining urban connections linking the Gold Coast Boulevard, Orchid Avenue and Cavill Avenue, reinforcing the edge of the district and at the same time creating new view corridors and public spaces that help to prov-

ide pedestrian connections from the waterways to the beach."

The design contributes significantly to the unification of the city's collection of active public spaces.

A landscaped plaza at the base of the western tower will serve as a space to pause, while to the northern side a glazed corridor will connect the two towers, making interior circulation visible and fostering a sense of community and place.

The corridor allows natural light into the podium spaces and provides access to a number of facilities on level one.

"This project presents an optimistic view for the future development of the city heart and a great amount of consideration has been taken to express it at every level of function, form and operation," said Mr Crighton.

"Surfers Paradise is a vibrant mixture of architectural expressions and this development creates its own distinctive vocabulary and profile.

"It is an animated place of dignity and character where the city's people can live, work and visit."



An artist's impression of the Raptis Group's Hilton Surfers Paradise