



ISLAND DREAM TO RISE AGAIN

Bulletin

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NEW life is being breathed into Port Hinchinbrook resort at Cardwell which was the vision of tourism doyen Keith Williams but which was bat-tered and closed by Cyclone Yasi in 2011. As well as completing the vision of the late Mr Williams for expanding the resort, there are plans to reopen a low impact resort at Cape Richards on Hinchinbrook Island, provide ferry services for tourists and install a tourism pontoon on one of the reefs off Hinch-inbrook Island.

“Tourism is really going to employ the next generation,” said former Townsville agent Bruce Goddard who will open a sales office at the resort in July. A syndicate called Passage Holdings, linked to American businessmen Lewis Cohen and Stephan Pinto, are expected to settle a deal to buy the resort and marina property from liquidators FTI Consulting for a lowly \$3 million.

They are said to have al-ready spent \$4 million on im-provements with hundreds of millions of dollars in invest-ment to come, including the dredging of the marina basin which was filled with sediment and wreckage from Yasi. A masterplan for the resort, being devised by DBI Design, includes a \$45 million international fishing village, a new marina, family resort, water theme park, a 300-site motor-home park, camp grounds, backpacker accommodation and waterfront residential lots. The syndicate’s initial \$4 million investment has included \$500,000 for restoring a sewerage treatment plant, more than \$2 million on the grounds and marina village, commercial building, street lighting and public access, and \$750,000 on designs.

The resort’s restaurant and retail precinct is due to reopen in mid-July following repairs and work is poised to start on dredging the harbour and the rebuilding a 266-berth marina. Resort resident David Hutchen, who worked with Keith Williams on Hamilton Island and founded Fantasea Cruises before its sale in 2006, is advising the group. Mr Hutchen said he be-lieved Mr Williams’ vision for the area would be realised. “I think it’s a fantastic op-portunity,” Mr Hutchen said. “All that the new owners are doing is completing what Keith Williams planned.” Mr Goddard said he would open Hinchinbrook Harbour sales and marketing to market new homes, land, apartments and townhouses as well as de-velopment sites. He said Passage Holdings was investing “serious money” which would help lift regional tourism amenity and capacity.

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