

The Sunday Times

Karratha Relieved

6 January 2008

CONSTRUCTION of a motel-style facility for at least 1400 people will start in the new year to meet Karratha's demand for short-term accommodation.

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan said the **MAC Services** Group (the MAC) had been selected to build the accommodation village on a 20ha site in Gap Ridge.

She said at least 40 per cent of the units would be set aside for civil works contractors, builders and tradespeople working on residential developments in the town.

Ms MacTiernan said strong growth in the resources sector had put pressure on the region's real estate market, but building more houses quickly had been difficult because even the construction workers could not find accommodation.

"This prompted the State Government to think outside the square to develop a solution that went beyond LandCorp's primary land development proposal," she said.

The Government was aware that employee accommodation challenges were also holding back the growth of other local businesses.

"We have added more than 340 residential lots to the market in Karratha in the past 18 months, and have more than 1300 lots planned, all with development conditions requiring construction in a 30-month time frame."

MLA Fred Riebeling said good-quality accommodation would attract more builders to construct homes as a result of the Government's accelerated land release program.

"Karratha residents are having real difficulties finding builders and this project should help," he said.

Ms MacTiernan said Australian company the MAC was selected from a short list of 19 proposals.

"We were pleased with the quantity and quality of the submissions, with more than 200 companies Australia-wide registering their interest with LandCorp," she said.

The MAC executive chairman Kevin Maloney said the company looked forward to finalising contract details with LandCorp and the Shire of Roebourne.

"We hope to get rooms under construction by May so they can be available for occupancy before the end of 2008," he said.

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