



## The MAC to build 1,400 Karratha units

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Construction on a 'motel-like' facility for at least 1,400 people will begin next year in a bid to meet Karratha's demand for short-term accommodation.

Planning and infrastructure minister Alannah MacTiernan said The MAC Services Group Limited, had been selected as the preferred proponent to construct the accommodation village on a 20 hectare site at Gap Ridge.

Ms MacTiernan 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.

"Strong growth in the resources sector has placed pressure on the region's real estate market, but building more houses quickly was difficult, as construction workers themselves couldn't find accommodation," she said.

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

"We are well aware that employee accommodation challenges are also holding back the growth of other local businesses, so this announcement is a great outcome for the town.

"So far we have added more than 340 residential lots to the market in Karratha over the last 18 months, and have more than 1,300 lots planned in total, all with development conditions requiring construction within a 30-month timeframe."

Local 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," Mr Riebeling said.

Ms MacTiernan said The MAC was selected from a short list of 19 proposals.

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

The MAC is an Australian company currently with more than 3,750 permanent rooms under ownership and management in the North Queensland coal fields.

Executive chairman Kevin Maloney said the MAC looked forward to working with LandCorp and Shire of Roebourne to finalise contract details.

"We hope to get rooms under construction by May so they can be available for occupancy before the end of 2008 and will alleviate the accommodation shortage in Karratha," Mr Maloney said.

"The Gap Ridge village will allow us to demonstrate the design and quality of a MAC village, combined with speed of supply.

"Our policy is to employ locals whenever possible and to provide training and employment opportunities so staff can advance their careers."