

State's largest eco-attraction set to boost city economy



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Ipswich The largest eco-tourism project in Queensland is set to turbo-charge the Ipswich economy, bringing a much needed boost to local jobs while helping to accelerate the rapid recovery in tourism and hospitality jobs.

Ipswich Mayor Teresa Harding said the recently approved Bubbling Springs project, an eco and adventure tourism resort set over 1,616 hectares near Spicers Hidden Vale at Grandchester and Hidden Vale

Adventure Mountain Bike Park, highlighted the confidence in the Ipswich tourism and hospitality market. "Our region is already home to a range of incredible things to do and see, and I'm really excited there will be a world-class addition to the list," Mayor Harding said.

"Ipswich saw 1,578,000 visitors in the year ending March 2021, a significant result considering Noosa saw 1,730,000 visitors in the same timeframe.

"Our tourism sector is recovering faster as well. Like everywhere post-COVID, Ipswich has seen a decline in visitation down by 17 percent. However, our sector is bouncing back compared to the state average which has fallen by 29 percent.

“Given major events like the Winter Nationals and Ipswich Cup have been staged in the last few months, I would expect a strong final quarter result.”

Mayor Harding said the Bubbling Springs expansion would further accelerate the city’s recovery, by providing greater accommodation capacity and supporting existing regionally significant attractions.

“It will also provide much needed facilities to visitors of Hidden Vale Adventure Park, which has more than 110kms of world class mountain biking and trail running tracks for all ages and abilities. It also aims to preserve the natural landscape, in line with conservation work already being supported by Spicers Hidden Vale.

“This is wonderful and exciting news for our region, and a vote of confidence in Ipswich as a noted destination for sports, recreation, and getting outdoors. I’m looking forward to seeing the finished product.”

The Bubbling Springs project will include a new camping site, grass tent sites, semi-permanent glamping structures, caravan park, communal use eco facilities as well as expanded mountain bike and running trails for almost 300 guests.

A total of 60 single campsites, three group sites accommodating eight individual tents per site, seven caravan sites and eight permanent eco tents have been approved for development and will support general day use and major events like 3plus3, Trail Run Epic, Merida Hidden Vale 24hrs and Ipswich Trail Run Series.

The site will also be supported by five barbecue pavilions, four amenities blocks and two camp kitchens and live music from 7pm to 10pm.