



Estate all going to plan



Oonoonba's innovative 'The Village' development continues to draw buyers, with the latest land selling like hot cakes, writes **Rachele McCabe**

INNER city land continues to be highly sought after, with the latest release of 23 lots in Oonoonba's The Village all but selling out in just days.

Only two blocks of land remained on Wednesday in the Stage 5a land release.

First homebuyers and the semi-retired have particularly been drawn to the The Village, a master planned community developed by Economic Development Queensland (EDQ).

EDQ director Andrew Sly said he was overwhelmed with the response, especially given the current market.

"With only two lots remaining in this stage release, and other stages selling quickly, interested homeowners should come and look at what is available now," Mr Sly said.

"The inner-city, riverfront location of this estate is appealing for first home buyers. It enables them to get a foothold into the real estate market, while still enjoying the city heart and its social opportunities." The new lots, ranging from 160sq m to 371sq m, were released on Friday with prices starting from \$115,000 and with house and land packages from \$289,000.

The swift land sales came as no surprise to Ellis Development's Pam

Ellis. Ellis Developments is one of The Village's key builders.

The company just sold one of their houses (living area pictured) in The Village off the internet – sight unseen. "Steve (company director) was building the home to be an Ellis Development display home in The Village ... it wasn't even for sale," Mrs Ellis said.

The new owner, who bought the home for his daughter to live in, fell in love with the funky interior design, which had been painstakingly planned by Mrs Ellis.

"The bottom line is the client and his daughter love the home ... We are so lucky to have lovely clients to design and build dream homes for," she said.

"I had chosen all the fit outs and then Steve told me it's not actually going to be the display home, he had just sold it. She was moving to Townsville and her Dad found our houses online.

"We have just found a broad range of people are wanting house and land without large blocks and without body corporates of a unit."

Mr Sly said The Village catered for buyers across all budgets.

"This stage will include modern, low-maintenance terrace and urban homes which are perfect for young couples or empty nesters looking to sidestep body corporate fees and invest in their future."

Three new display homes have also recently opened at The Village.

Amenities include Wes Barrett

Park, with its barbecue facilities and play equipment and walking paths which will connect the riverfront through to the Abbott St pedestrian and cycle bridge.

Development of the Oonoonba site kicked off in 2011 with 150 lots sold to date. A further 16 stages are in the pipeline with about 720 homes scheduled for release before the development wraps up during 2019.

Meanwhile, the latest REIQ data for the September quarter shows Townsville median house prices have

held steady, hovering around \$350,000 with units achieving a median value of \$290,000. This is good news in comparison to other regional cities like Mackay and Rockhampton who saw median values fall, but data also shows we are lagging behind our northern neighbour, Cairns.

"Cairns has emerged as the star performer of Queensland real estate, with strong sales volumes sparking a 2.4 per cent rise in median values in the three months to September," REIQ CEO Antonia Mercorella said.

"Over the last 12 months, the Cairns median house value has risen 9.3 per cent and it's fair to say the local real estate market has hit a purple patch.

"Gladstone, Mackay and Rockhampton saw a slight easing in median house values during the same period, while Townsville held relatively steady."



STYLISH: The living area of a Ellis Developments home that was sold recently.