

Area set to soar

PLANNED infrastructure projects and the availability of value-for-money properties are underpinning the strength of the border market.

Tweed Economic Development Corporation CEO Tom Senti said there was more than \$650 million in completed or planned development in the Tweed area.

Buyers still have the chance to invest in the region for under \$500,000, though opportunities at this level are in demand.

The latest infrastructure announcements, including an upgrade Sexton's Hill and the plans to redevelop Jack Evans Boat Harbour, will improve the attractiveness of Tweed and its surround-

ing areas as a residential destination. Without the hustle and bustle of the Gold Coast, the Tweed is being positioned for the next stage of its growth.

Real estate agent David Stringer said historically the area had played second fiddle to the Gold Coast, but he believed it was on the cusp of change.

Development activity includes Casuarina Beach, Salt and new projects such as the \$60 million River at Barney's Point.

This diversity of living options is expected to capture future growth.

The Sexton's Hill upgrade will inv-

olve the construction of a six-lane divided road with a 360m viaduct, land bridge and interchanges at both the southern and northern ends.

The project is expected to emulate the success of the Tugun bypass, which was completed in 2007.

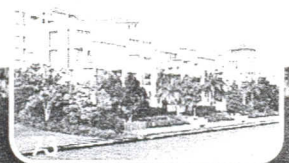
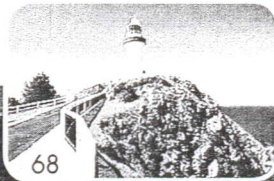
According to demographer Bernard Salt the Tweed Coast demonstrated the qualities the near-retirement baby-boomer population was looking for - beachside locations with good infrastructure, employment opportunities and tight supply in the housing market.

Mr Salt tips the southern end of the Gold Coast - Palm Beach, Tugun, Coolangatta - as areas he sees 'taking off' in the next property cycle.

Southern Cross University is cementing its foothold in tertiary education facilities, establishing a new campus within the Gold Coast Airport Development Park.

Just 400m from North Kirra Beach, the \$20 million building is becoming a landmark in that area.

Due for completion next year, the campus will complement existing SCU locations at Tweed Heads.



67	Banora Point	69	Coolangatta	71	Pottsville
67	Bilambil Heights	69	Currumbin	72	Reedy Creek
67	Bilinga	70	Elanora	72	Tallebudgera Valley
68	Burleigh Heads	70	Kingscliff	72	Terranora
68	Burleigh Waters	70	Kirra	73	Tugun
68	Byron Bay	71	Murwillumbah	73	Tweed Heads
69	Casuarina Beach	71	Paluma Beach	73	Yarralu Lakes

Experts tip Tweed as next sea-change destination

THE Tweed Coast is emerging as a hotspot for affordable beachside property.

Some of Australia's top financial and real estate analysts say the area is slated for strong population, infrastructure and employment growth over the coming years.

The predictions were revealed when financial commentator Michael Pascoe, demographer Bernard Salt, independent property analyst Michael Matusik and Tweed Economic Development Corporation CEO Tom Senti met for a recent forum at Salt Village.

Mr Senti said along with more than \$650 million completed or planned development in the Tweed area, there were plans to create another 25,000 jobs in the region over the next 20 years to cater for population growth.

"People are realising that the Tweed region has enormous untapped potential," he said.

"The Tweed has long stood in the Gold Coast's shadow, but that is starting to change.

"With more jobs and expenditure on infrastructure planned for the coming years, the Tweed is among the most strategically positioned regions in the nation for future growth."



Lifestyle and economic reasons are creating interest in the Tweed region

Mr Salt said areas such as the Tweed Coast would continue to prove popular with Australians for decades to come, for both lifestyle and economic reasons.

"The fundamentals that have driven the sea-change shift over the past seven years have not changed, with beachside areas supported by good infrastructure and amenities, such as the Tweed Coast, expected to lead the way over the next decade," he said.

"The baby boomer generation is on the cusp of retirement and the latest

demographic research suggests the majority of these people will move to settle in beachside locations between now and 2021.

"The destinations that attract most people are those supported by good infrastructure, employment opportunities and tight supply in the housing market."

Mr Pascoe and Mr Matusik echoed that now was a good time to buy, debunking the doom and gloom outlook and agreeing the property market remained resilient.

Mr Matusik said despite common belief prices were not falling and demand for property remained strong.

"It's true that there has been a fall in median sale prices in recent months, but resale prices, which are a much better indicator of the strength of a market, have actually risen – particularly across the Gold and Tweed coasts," he said.

"In reality, the reported fall in average property prices is a reflection of the fact the lower end of the property market is becoming more active and in the Gold Coast-Tweed region demand is strong for homes priced up to \$750,000."

Mr Pascoe said some analysts had made extreme predictions about downward trends in property values.

"That well-publicised horror forecast that Australian home prices will fall by 40 per cent certainly grabs headlines, but it is demonstrably incorrect," he said.

"The counter-intuitive fact is that average Australian house prices – and I stress 'average' – actually increased during the last recession.

"There's every indication the average home will again prove remarkably resilient in this recession.

"You wouldn't want to be facing the global recession in any other country."