



A concept image of the Bunnings trade outlet to be developed at Murwillumbah

# Bunnings strikes trade outlet deal

by Travis Lye  
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**HARDWARE** and gardening giant Bunnings Group is planning for growth and will have a trade distribution centre purpose-built for it at Murwillumbah's Industry Central Estate.

The new \$6 million-plus facility will be provided by the estate's developer, Gold Coast figure Peter Mitchell, who will lease it to Bunnings in a deal whose terms have not been disclosed.

The facility will occupy a 1.34ha site on Kite Street, have 5000sqm of floorspace and be built of pre-cast concrete panels.

Construction of the centre, to be undertaken by Williams River Steel, is expected to start within weeks for completion in mid-2009.

The building has been designed by Robert Gow Architects - with which Mr Mitchell has enjoyed a long business association, and will include ducted airconditioned office space and 3000sqm of hardstand area.

The building project is the fourth Mr Mitchell has announced for Industry Central in the past month.

The developer is also seeking approval for a 1500sqm purpose-designed facility for Pottsville Forge, linked to John Forrester, which specialises in forged steel products.

The building will include 200sqm of office space with ducted airconditioning and a sound-proof, sand-blasting booth.

It will have 8m height clearance and twin roller-door access.

Also, a major producer of ice-cream cones, The Scandinavian Cone Company, is establishing a new base at Industry Central after reaching a turnkey package arrangement with Mr Mitchell.

The facility will include a food preparation area, baking area, warehouse, and office space.

Rhino Linings Australasia has paid \$3 million for a 6000sqm parcel in the estate and plans to develop a 2600sqm factory-warehouse building.

It specialises in spray-applied protective linings for vehicles.

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Sites in the \$350 million Industry Central range from 1700sqm to 5ha and are earmarked for factory, distribution and service industry buildings.

Bunnings, an arm of Wesfarmers, was introduced to the estate by Nicholas Brown from Surfers Paradise real estate agency Bayliss & Samra.

Mr Brown said he also had introduced two other large operators to the estate and hoped to finalise both deals shortly.

Matthew Toohy, property manager at Bunnings, said that, in addition to its aggressive

rollout of stores across Australia and New Zealand, Bunnings was embarking on the rollout of trade centres for professional builders.

Mr Mitchell said he intended to sell the Bunnings facility under lease when it was completed.

"Now that the Tugun bypass is operating, buyers and tenants are realising that Murwillumbah is a fantastic location from which to service the area south to Grafton and north to the northern Gold Coast," he said.

Land prices at Industry Central average \$200/sqm, with prices starting from \$165/sqm.

Mr Mitchell is also offering full finance to owner-occupiers.

He said he was in talks with a number of top ASX-listed companies wanting to establish at Industry Central.

"I hope to be able announce the new deals soon," he said.

Tom Senti from the Tweed Economic Development Corporation (TEDC), said the Tweed region was the future growth area of the Tweed-Gold Coast region.

Mr Senti said the area had a lot of attractions for larger companies and Mr Mitchell had cleverly targeted this market.

"His first four buildings at Industry Central are all over 2200sqm with an average size of nearly 3300sqm," said Mr Senti.

"And don't forget about the employment that is being generated by this development."

Mr Senti said, with developments such as Industry Central, the Tweed region was entering 'a new time of sustained prosperity'.