

Inner-city revitalisation partnership announced for Rotorua

A locally owned and operated family sawmilling company, Donelley Sawmillers, in conjunction with Abodo Wood, has joined forces with Rotorua Lakes Council to complete phase two of the inner-city revitalisation project at the former City Focus site.

'Rotorua 2030' is the vision of the Rotorua Lakes Council – seven major long-term goals that will renew the city. One of the top priorities is the inner-city revitalisation project which aims to unlock the city centre's potential so it becomes a place where people will want to go.

The team at Bespoke Landscape Architects were commissioned to undertake the detailed design for the project, which they completed in March. The project is currently out to tender.

In April last year, the council adopted a Wood First policy which recognises that Rotorua sits at the heart of New Zealand's forestry and wood industry, and that approximately 40% of the country's wood is harvested within 100 km of the inner city. The policy encourages use of wood products to support the district's wood industry and – in the case of the inner-city revitalisation project – locally sourced timber that is processed within the district.

The council has recently entered into a partnership with Donelley Sawmillers, who will supply timber for all the wooden products at a reduced rate while its marketing arm, Abodo Wood, will provide expert research and development consulting advice



L-R: Deputy mayor Dave Donaldson, Donelley Sawmillers managing director Aaron Donelley, mayor Steve Chadwick and inner-city revitalisation portfolio lead councillor Karen Hunt

around how the design can be achieved. Abodo is renowned for the design and manufacture of exterior products using durable, natural wood.

SHOWCASING WOOD DESIGN

Marketing director Daniel Gudsell says Abodo sources its raw material from certified forests in the region. "Rotorua's Wood First initiative recognises the economic, environmental, cultural and social significance of wood within the community, and it is our pleasure to support such a project in Rotorua, as well as showcase what timber can achieve," he says.

Rotorua mayor Steve Chadwick says the partnership will showcase innovative wood design as a major part of the inner-city revitalisation programme. "This is incredibly exciting to hear of this contribution from Donelleys, a longstanding family in our community with a history of being innovative sawmillers,"

Ms Chadwick says.

"It is fantastic that their brand is now going to come right into the heart of the city. It is also a lovely link with a company that we value in our community."

Donelley's, based in Reporoa, employs 60 people and wants to continue to support and invest in the Rotorua and Bay of Plenty community. Donelley Sawmillers managing director Aaron Donelley, born and bred in the Rotorua district, says he is delighted to be involved in such an iconic project.

"The wood is environmentally friendly and a sustainable product from our own backyard, the Kaingaroa Forest," he says. "We will be working with radiata (pine). It is chemical free, competes with hardwood, and is locally sourced. We're a local sawmiller, we want to support Rotorua and we're surrounded by wood, so why not use it?"

New 'pod' hotel set to ease accommodation shortage in Queenstown

A new hotel designed to address a chronic shortage of accommodation in one of New Zealand's fastest-growing tourist centres will open next year.

The new five-storey 256-bed pod hotel will be in Queenstown's CBD and is thought to be one of the tallest planned for the area. The new accommodation will be a mixture of pod style and some private rooms with ensuites.

JUCY CEO Tim Alpe says the hotel will be aimed at a budget traveller, but will also cater for families. "The pricing is designed to meet the needs of the budget traveller, whether it's a back-



The proposed JUCY Snooze hotel accommodation in Queenstown's CBD

Apartment Programming

Tenders / Cost reviews / Methodology
Contract / Target / Sub contracts
Monitoring / Reports dashboard
Delays analysis / EoT submissions.

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packer or a family. Most of the pod units will be priced at around \$45 with family rooms starting at \$85," he says.

Mr Alpe says the hotel will include a new rooftop restaurant and bar with expansive views overlooking Lake Wakatipu. It will be the third opened in the JUCY Snooze chain within two years, following Auckland and Christchurch.

CONSTRUCTION ADVANTAGES

Architect Jason Gerrand from JCY Architects says the JUCY self-contained pod units offer several design and construction advantages. The concept has been adopted globally, but is a first for New Zealand, and offers an affordable sleeping solution with the pods within rooms.

The self-contained 'micro accommodation' pod units provide sleeping space for an individual. Each pod includes LED lighting, USB and power points, and a flip-down table with bag storage underneath. The design offers far more privacy and amenity than any 'standard bunk', Mr Gerrand says.

In addition, manufacturing the pods offsite using a production-line process will increase the speed at which the structure can be built. The factory operates 24 hours a day and manufacturing is

not delayed by weather. Once assembled, the pods are delivered to the site and dropped into the structure during the fitout.

"It allows us to simultaneously construct the rooms while the pod elements are completed in the factory," Mr Gerrand says. "It's 'plug and play' drop-in construction – each pod drops seamlessly into the completed shell onsite which provides a high-quality and funky end solution," he says.

UNIQUE TECHNOLOGY

Mr Alpe says in addition to the compact style of the accommodation, the pods will also feature unique technology which will allow travellers to control their own stay.

"Tourists will be able to check in, open and secure their rooms using a smartphone app currently in development. Each pod will have a tablet where guests will be able to wirelessly manage their room and travel itinerary, and purchase entertainment on demand," he notes.

The hotel will be located on Queenstown's Camp Street, an area popular with tourists, and is expected to open in October 2017 in time for the busy summer season.