



# Juniper starts to put its Soul into the rebirth of Surfers Paradise

by Shannon Willoughby  
business reporter

THE Soul of Surfers Paradise is about to grow up – 77 storeys up.

Yesterday, after months of demolishing and digging, work began on the construction.

The \$850 million landmark tower, being built on the old Raptis Plaza site on The Esplanade, will be finished in 2011.

It will be the Coast's second tallest building after Q1 and will feature a \$100 million retail precinct fronting the beach and Cavill Mall.

Despite the slowing economy, developer Juniper Group said sales of more than \$450 million had been achieved.

Last week, a Sydney couple snapped up a sub-penthouse for \$8.65 million.

Juniper Group joint managing director Shaun Juniper said sales at the top end of the market continued to flourish.

"We have had \$450 million sales in the project, which we think is fantastic," he said.

"This (the building of the tower) is a milestone both from the development side and the construction side of this project," he said.

"We are officially coming out of the ground." Neill Baxter, Queensland general manager of

Grocon, the company constructing the tower, said innovative building techniques were important because of the building's height.

"(It) is so tall we had to come up with some innovative ideas on how we do the piling," he said. "We have piling into the ground over 40m. That has been quite a challenge for us but something Grocon is very used to."

Grocon is also developing Brisbane's Vision tower and Niecon's Oracle at Broadbeach.

Mr Juniper said Soul would breathe new life into Surfers Paradise.

"It's the transformation of the Gold Coast; a brand new Surfers Paradise is being delivered right now," he said.

"To have the Hilton being built next door is fantastic. It reassures everyone that Surfers Paradise is still moving ahead in these times at the moment.

"They have achieved fantastic sales. We have achieved fantastic sales and it just shows the strength of the Gold Coast market."

He said unlike the Hilton, where sales had been to predominantly offshore interests, Soul had attracted mostly local buyers.

The retail precinct, which will be retained by Juniper, will be released over the next month.



An artist's impression of the Soul tower



Going up in the world . . . Shaun Juniper, Graeme Juniper and Neill Baxter at the site yesterday ● Picture: Glenn Hampson