



Cairns Post
12-May-2010
 Page: 32
 General News
 Region: Cairns QLD
 Circulation: 25626
 Type: Regional
 Size: 226.12 sq.cms
 Frequency: MTWTF--

Outlook for Square 'positive'

SOME new restaurants have begun trading at Cairns Square but the shopping centre still has plenty of empty space.

So is the centre coming or going?

The Juniper Group bought the old Tropical Arcade a couple of years ago and gave it a massive makeover.

From a scruffy old corner site, it now looks clean and new. The only concern is there aren't that many shops.

Junipers couldn't be con-

tacted for comment this week, but there are some positive signs for Cairns Square.

Just recently two fast-food stores – Red Rooster and Kebab World – began trading on the ground floor.

Surfing and clothing stores also call it home.

CBD councillor Alan Blake is one who believes the Square has a bright future.

"Spaces may take time to sell as times are tough for CBD retail at the moment," Cr Blake said.

"But I think it is excellent retail space.

"A downturn is probably a great time to do a 'refurb'."

Cr Blake said the number of empty spaces was probably reflective of the CBD, rather than the Square.

"It might take time, but that's what happened with Earlville (Stockland), Raintrees and Cairns Central," he said.

A concerted campaign has been under way to revitalise the CBD in recent times,

with Cairns Chamber establishing a task force towards that end.

Earlier this year, *The Cairns Post* and Business Week documented the number of empty shops not only on the Esplanade but around the CBD generally.

This led to a debate about whether the global financial crisis was to blame or whether landlords had neglected their properties and made them unattractive to tenants.



Filling up: Cairns Square has attracted two fast-food stores to its growing variety