



THE (TOWERING) HEIGHT OF LUXURY

City apartment block to be NZ's tallest – dwarfing others in new era of plush high-rise residences

Auckland is “stepping up” into the international city big-league with construction soon to begin on New Zealand's tallest apartment building.

To soar 178m above the city's skyline, the 57-storey building – The Pacifica – will bring to Auckland the kind of high-rise luxury apartment living seen in Singapore, Hong Kong and other cities around the world.

“It is incredibly exciting and is really a step up to the sort of international quality we've never had before in New Zealand,” says Gavin Lloyd, national director of residential projects for CBRE, the commercial real estate services company marketing the apartment complex for Australasian developers Hengyi Pacific.

“Its sheer size and scale and the new style of luxury inner city living it will bring, I am sure will create an iconic landmark for Auckland.”

Demand for the complex's 285 apartments is

high. Sales of over \$100 million – or about 38 per cent of availability – have been achieved since the official opening of The Pacifica's show suite three weeks ago.

The Pacifica, which is expected to be ready to open in 2020, is to stand in Commerce St close to Auckland's waterfront and will command panoramic views over Waitemata Harbour and Hauraki Gulf.

It will dwarf other high-rise apartment buildings in Auckland including the Metropolis which at 155m and 40 floors is currently the highest.

The Pacifica development comes as Auckland's inner city population is booming – about 45,000 currently live there; the number is expected to increase by a further 30,000 in the next 10 years – and as the Auckland Unitary Plan's provisions for greater urban intensification kick in.

Lloyd says Auckland is beginning to catch

up to the rest of the world: “The first apartment boom in the '90s was aimed mainly at students but new age apartment developers need to meet the expectations of today's buyers, many of whom are well travelled and have probably lived in apartments overseas.

“It is the beginning of a new era,” he says, “and brings with it a new concept of ‘living in the sky’.

“We should build as high as we can go in the CBD at the same time as maintaining the city's lush green areas and the charm of the suburbs. It never ceases to amaze me that within 10 minutes of the CBD you find open pasture with sheep and horses grazing, I hope Auckland never loses that.”

Auckland is facing a similar scenario to that evident in Sydney. According to a 2015 report by Chris Johnson, chief executive of Sydney's Urban Taskforce, over a quarter of the city's 1.6 million homes were urban apartments at the 2011 census.



“Since the census, 70 per cent of housing approvals were for apartments,” Johnson says, “and at this rate Sydney will become half apartments and half suburban houses in the next 40 years or so.

“So why is this happening? The city is reaching the limits of its horizontal spread; it can't keep spreading as that forces longer and longer travel times.”

The Pacifica apartments, which start at 60sqm and have 34 different floor plans, will be positioned in the building from level eight, meaning all will have floor-to-ceiling

views over the city and harbour. Prices start at \$657,000 and options include commerce residences, tower suites, sky homes and penthouses.

Lloyd says The Pacifica will have world-class facilities including high-end European appliances and Italian stone and marble for the bathrooms, an indoor/outdoor lap pool, spa, sauna, gym, outdoor fitness deck, cinema, library, residents' lounge and barbecue terrace.

A small boutique hotel will be located at the levels below the apartments while a restaurant and café will be at the ground level.

“A laneway called Pacific Lane will run between Commerce, Fort and Gore streets creating a new precinct to add to the revitalisation of the central city neighbourhood,” he says. “Residents will be able to step out their doors to the best restaurants and all that the city has to offer.”

Lloyd says people are welcome to visit The Pacifica show suite which is open every day between 11am and 4pm at 152 Quay St (level nine), visit the web site (www.thepacifica.co.nz), like on Facebook (@ThePacificaNZ) and Instagram (@thepacifica).

Melbourne-based developers Hengyi Pacific have built other complexes in the Melbourne CBD including the 23-floor, 531-apartment building 199 William. They are currently building the Light House, a 69-level complex with 627 apartments also in downtown Melbourne.

**According to the Chicago-based Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), the 170m Vero Centre is currently Auckland's highest building other than Sky Tower which stands at 328m (the council puts Auckland at 163 on a list of cities with completed buildings over 150m high). CTBUH says the tallest building in the world at 828m is the Burj Khalifa in Dubai – a mix of office, residential and hotel space spread through 163 floors – while the tallest residential building is 432 Park Avenue in New York standing at 425m and 85 floors.*