

About 60,000 of them are spread along a kilometre of new waterfront plazas and gardens that have turned Brisbane's forgotten northern river's edge between Victoria Bridge and the Goodwill Bridge into a premier public playground.

Along with 100,000 others stretched across South Bank on the opposite side of the river, they count down towards the midnight fireworks. They are celebrating not just the arrival of a new year, but Brisbane's coming of age as a genuine 24/7 city.

"Events like Riverfire will be transformed," Simon Crooks, Destination Brisbane Consortium project director, said.



Future Brisbane: The new Queen's Wharf

But it's not just special occasions. Despite all the discussion about the integrated casino-resort luring Asian tourists to the city, the group behind the \$3 billion development is determined to make the precinct a year-round recreation magnet for local people — by day and night.

"Tourists want to come and experience what locals do," Star Entertainment Group Queensland managing director Geoff Hogg. "It's very much about having a place that people can come and enjoy."

"There's a real disconnect at the moment. South Bank has been unbelievable but the north side of the river has not. As the sun starts to set, perhaps this side of the river can come to life a bit more."

Queens Wharf will feature 50 restaurants, cafes and eateries and bars — from coffee bars to high-end dining — and Mr Hogg says the days of struggling to get a meal after 8.30pm will be a thing of the past.



Skydeck will be a key feature of the Queen's Wharf development.



An aerial view of Queen's Wharf.



Aerial view over George Street of the Queens Wharf development.



An aerial view over William St of Brisbane's Queen's Wharf.



Queen's Wharf will offer lifestyle and entertainment options.



The pedestrian bridge connecting Queen's Wharf and South Bank.

“We expect QWB to really accelerate Brisbane’s development as a globally competitive international destination. So there will be premium hotels, entertainment, bars, restaurants and other attractions that will showcase Brisbane as an exciting alternative to the many other tourist spots across Australia,” he said.

“Those visitors will expect a comprehensive hospitality and entertainment offer — including late night alternatives.”

The consortium sees Queens Wharf complimenting the arts and cultural precinct including the QPAC theatres, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA). Mr Hogg said he hoped the proposed Brisbane Live precinct including a new 16,000-seat entertainment arena would get the go-ahead, further boosting the night-time economy.

Around 7.5 hectares of Queens Wharf — equivalent to 12 football fields — will be public space.

The iconic Sky Deck sitting 100 metres high atop the resort’s signature arc-shaped building will be open 24 hours a day with eateries and bars.

Offering 360-degree panoramas over the city and river “is designed to be one of those must-do things in Brisbane,” Mr Hogg said.

An outdoor cinema is expected to be a big drawcard for families.

Future Brisbane: A city takes shape

The foreshore area will be “a constantly-changing environment” of different entertainment. A light and sound river show is in the planning.

The three waterfront precincts — The Landing, Queens Wharf Plaza and Waterline Park — will host festivals and exhibitions, big screens, markets and pop-up dining as well as casual spots to relax and play areas.

The Undercurrent Village will include a sound garden stage performance area and urban sculpture.

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A new mangrove boardwalk with indigenous trail will link to the Goodwill Bridge.

Heritage trails will highlight some of the city’s most historic buildings which are being retained and revamped.

The Treasury building, home to the current casino, will become a high-end department store. The former Government Printery and Public Services Club will host gourmet fresh food markets, a craft brewery, boutique stores, outdoor courtyard dining areas and a cooking school.

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The former Department of Primary Industries building is flagged for a live music venue and gastropubs facing the river.

An Aboriginal and European Heritage Centre, with interactive exhibitions, will be located in the former State Library building.