



A new business group will help restore the waves

Preparing for Kirra's comeback

BY ED SOUTHORN

KIRRA, the regional property boom spot on the Tweed's doorstep, now has its own business lobby group ready to throw weight behind the push to bring back Kirra's famous barrelling surf.

The Kirra Business Group, announced the day after the *Tweed Daily News* reported the top two highrise projects for the value of apartments sold on the southern Gold Coast and the Tweed were both at Kirra, wants to work with the new Kirra Point Committee and local, state and federal authorities to re-establish Kirra's waves.

The business group believes their future depends on restoring the surf break which has only just begun to reappear after a build-up of sand offshore and on the beachfront from the Tweed River Sand Bypass pumping,

Kirra Business Group spokesman John Rankin said: "One of our primary objectives is to enhance the reputation of Kirra as a destination by improving its recreational amenity.

"We will be working closely with the Kirra Point Committee to bring about the rejuvenation of the Kirra surf which has declined in recent years."

"Kirra is a great place to visit with wonderful restaurants, cafes and retail outlets, but the width of the beach is a major negative influence.

"In contrast, during the nineties Kirra suffered from beach erosion, so we need to find the right balance."

Neil Lazarow, of Griffith University's Centre for Coastal Management, said the loss of Kirra as a recreational asset and one of the world's premier surfing breaks had significantly

affected the local economy.

He said about 70,000 surfers spent up to \$500 million a year on the Gold Coast.

"By working closely with government authorities to bring back the Kirra surf break, visitors will return."

The new business group, which plans to meet monthly, will assist in running events to raise money and awareness for the campaign to restore Kirra's surf.

Kirra Business Group member Ross McInnes, a distributor for On a Mission surf accessories, has established the On a Mission Foundation, to be launched during the Quiksilver Pro world surfing championship tour event at Snapper Rocks later this month. The foundation will support organisations protecting the surfing environment.



□ ROSS McInnes (left) and John Rankin are heading a push to bring back the famous swells to Kirra Beach.

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