

Quality Development on the Coast: The Stevens Group



As one of our region's most renowned developers, and with award-winning projects across NSW, **The Stevens Group** has been working to create opportunities and communities across the Central Coast for almost 40 years.

We sat down with Property Group Director, **Brett Harrod**, to find out why this distinguished Group has always chosen to call the Central Coast home.

What's the Coast's biggest drawcard for The Stevens Group?

Definitely our relaxed, coastal lifestyle. People underestimate the quality of life we have here on the Coast, and we design developments to support and enhance that lifestyle. Our close proximity to both Sydney and Newcastle is also a major drawcard.

What are some of your current lifestyle developments?

We've got a range of residential developments happening across the Coast, such as:

- The recently completed Kings Estate at Terrigal. This 160-lot Community Title subdivision incorporates controls and architectural guidelines to offer protection of riparian zones and environmental areas to adhere to the natural character of the land. The community has been granted ownership and given the responsibility of looking after the land, which is setting a precedent in sustainable residential developments.
- An 800-lot subdivision at Wyee, with the first 129 lots completed. This community offers large blocks and a relaxed, residential lifestyle, while still being on the public transport route to both Newcastle and Sydney. We've also recently completed a village-style subdivision in Gwandalan.
- A community hub in Kariong. We're finalising the purchase of nine hectares of land in front of Kariong High School and are currently in discussions with the State Government to transform this area into a local food, fuel and retail hub, which will provide enhanced facilities and services for local residents.
- A \$25 million hospitality and retail service centre at Warnervale is also currently in the planning stages.

How has the Central Coast market changed since The Stevens Group first came into business in 1982?

We've experienced a surge in residential growth, particularly on the northern end of the Coast, where there continues to be a residential explosion.

We've witnessed the emergence of Erina to the detriment of Gosford, and the continued growth of the Tuggerah retail precinct.

Another interesting phenomenon has been the reinvigoration of West Gosford – what was originally abattoir land has since adapted to an industrial and now retail precinct, with centres such as Riverside continuing to change the character of the area.

What have been your greatest challenges in establishing development projects here on the Central Coast?

A lack of planning and foresight by government bodies, including Council and the RMS. At times, this inability to see the bigger picture has hindered our region. There also hasn't been adequate planning to date for the future projected population growth of the Central Coast.

What contribution do developers make to communities like ours?

The role of developers is to create facilities to service and enhance communities. However, to do this, we need to work hand-in-hand with government, as it has the responsibility to create the platform that developers work from.

What do you hope the Central Coast will look like in five years' time?

I'd really like the Central Coast to develop its own identity. In many ways, we're still seen as the stop-gap between Sydney and Newcastle, and not a distinctive region in our own right.

We need to establish a common purpose and long-term vision as to who we are and what defines us. The Central Coast has so much potential - we just need a clear vision and direction as to where we go from here.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE STEVENS GROUP:

Phone: 4365 3351

Email: janine@stevensgroup.com.au

Facebook: The Stevens Group

Visit: www.stevensgroup.com.au



If you're a developer, builder, planner, or have a significant involvement in the Central Coast development and construction industry and would like to be featured as a part of the 'Quality Development on the Coast' Series, please contact RDACC on 4349 4949 or email john.mouland@rdacc.org.au



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