

**FUTURE**  
 GOLD COAST

Join us as we discuss the priorities for our beachfront city focusing on world class infrastructure, becoming a global tourism destination, our education potential and how we can be Hollywood 2.0 in our booming Northern Gold Coast corridor.

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# Start-up city ups & downs

## Knowledge economy's hub all go

**Keith Woods**

Costs have blown out on a high-tech research facility planned for the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge precinct but start-ups and major developments are surging into the precinct.

Griffith University first proposed building the seven-level ADaPT 2.0 facility at a Parklands Drive site in 2020.

The university sought a three-way funding split with state and federal governments for the estimated \$100 million cost of the project, envisioned to be a "one stop shop" for "advanced manufacturing prototyping which not only fosters technological advancements but also provides the opportunity to grow and diversify the Gold Coast economy".

It has made multiple budget submissions seeking funding for the project since it was first proposed.

However it is understood the cost of the proposed building has blown out far beyond the original estimate, with agreement on funding still not reached.

"Griffith University remains committed to growing its Advanced Design and Prototyping Technologies Institute (ADaPT) with a new development earmarked for the Gold Coast's Health and Knowledge Precinct," a university spokesperson said.

"The University continues to work with the state and federal governments on a three-way funding deal to see the facility come to fruition.

"Like all infrastructure projects, it is expected that the cost for the facility will have increased significantly since it was initially conceived."

Bonney MP Sam O'Connor said it was "pretty frustrating"


**Proxima**

**RDX Lumina**

**North Star**

**Life Sciences Centre**

the project would now cost considerably more. "It should have happened by now," Mr O'Connor said.

"The cost has blown out. It was \$100 million in 2020 and it's now probably \$150 million.

"It should not have taken this long. It's a great disappointment."

Despite the lack of progress on the ADaPT 2.0 building, there has been an upsurge of building work at the Health and Knowledge precinct, dominated by developments at state-owned Lumina.

Already under construction at the site are an \$80 million

children's health and education centre called Proxima and a \$154 million science, research and innovation facility called RDX Lumina.

Planning approval was also recently granted for the 11-storey Gold Coast Life Sciences Centre which is being developed by longstanding local company Niecon Developments.

Construction is expected to start next year on the centre which will include medical, technological and office suites, a state-of-the-art research hub, an auditorium, boardrooms, and seminar spaces.

Niecon Sales and Marketing Director James Nikiforides said it was a hugely significant project.

"The significance of medical precinct developments like this cannot be overstated," he said.

"Establishing a space that bridges medical practitioners, researchers, and patients fosters the most profound impact on community health.

"After prolonged efforts, with development approval in hand, all stakeholders are primed and enthusiastic to venture into the next phase."

A spokesperson for the De-

partment of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning said the new developments at Lumina would deliver thousands of jobs.

"A steady stream of development within Lumina is already occurring with Economic Development Queensland anticipating this momentum to continue as the precinct continues to evolve over the next 10 to 15 years," the spokesperson said.

"Eleven of 16 development-ready sites are in varying stages of development or negotiation.

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**James Nikiforides**  
 Niecon Sales and Marketing Director

"This includes four land sales to NorthWest Healthcare for RDX Lumina, its \$154 million science, research and innovation facility; Evans Long for Proxima, an \$80 million children's health and education centre of excellence (both under construction); Infinite Aged Care for a 142-bed integrated residential aged care and key worker training facility; and Griffith University for its Advanced Design and Prototyping Technologies (ADaPT) Institute.

"Land sale agreements and development approvals for two further sites have also been finalised.

"These six projects will create more than 1200 construction jobs, more than \$470 million in private sector investment and support 3100 new jobs at the precinct."

The area is also soon to be home to badly needed new affordable housing, with Deputy Premier Steven Miles in September announcing a 1.73ha site was being sold off to developers for build-to-rent units or student accommodation. A registrations of interest process for the site closed at the end of last month.