

Coles in seventh heaven

TONY RAGGATT | August 24th, 2012



An artist's impression of the Coles shopping centre being developed on Thuringowa Drive.

COMPETITION in the tightly held grocery sector is about to get even more intense at Kirwan where work has started on the city's largest Coles supermarket.

Hutchinson Builders has been contracted to build Coles' seventh supermarket in Townsville as part of a multimillion-dollar shopping centre development.

Coles regional manager Queensland Craig Cornish said the retailer was developing a 3600sq m supermarket and another 1500sq m of specialty shop floorspace on a 4.3ha site at the corner of Thuringowa Drive and Dalrymple Rd, Kirwan.

There is space on the site for more commercial development.

"It will be the largest store out of the current six stores in Townsville," Mr Cornish said. "There is room for future development down the track with possible other major retailers going in."

Mr Cornish said there had been huge population growth in the area to support the new store, particularly at Mount Louisa.

Townsville has provided the retailer with some of the best sales growth in the state.

Coles has another store in the area at the Willows, while Woolworths has stores at Parkside Gardens, The Avenues, Vincent Village and the Willows. Cornett's IGA has a store at Mount Louisa.

While retailers are pumping big money into bricks and mortar, there is also a growing trend to shopping online which could splinter a market dominated by the major retailers.

Coles opened a \$16.5 million shopping centre at Deeragun last week.

Mr Cornish said the Kirwan store would have a similar format to the Deeragun store with a market-style feel which had been well received by consumers.