

Flood of interest in \$100m complex

But plan months away

FAMILIES may be keen to get in line for the new entertainment and shopping centre planned for South Bundaberg, but council is unlikely to give the complex the green light until next year.

Insight Group director Rod Colwell said the lifestyle-themed centre had attracted plenty of retail interest.

"We have had overwhelming interest since we started advertising the development," Mr Colwell said.

"Most expressions of interest are from out-of-town retailers.

"A lot of businesses are not yet catered for.

"It was pretty obvious to us that there were some major gaps in the market."

Bundaberg City Council chief executive officer Peter Byrne said the size of the development and the work load of the planning department could mean it would be months before council voted on the project.

Mr Byrne said several objections had been lodged with council about the cinema and

food complex planned for Walla Street.

While families sit tight for the new centre to open, Mr Colwell said the 24,000sq m site would not disappoint if it got the go ahead.

"There will be a diverse mix of cinema, entertainment, restaurants, medical, and a broad range of shopping from a major discount store to groceries food and specialities," Mr Colwell said.

"It will have 853 under-cover car parks and 34 podium level parks.

"Shopping centres have changed now, people really want to go out for a combination of entertainment and shopping.

"We're not reinventing the wheel, we're just bringing something new to the city in one consolidated area."

He said the estimated cost of the project was between \$80 to \$100 million and the central location was perfect.

"Under the town plan, that's where the growth is," he said.

"There's some serious growth going on."