

Accor Announces Sydney's Only New-Build Hotels For This Decade

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First Pullman hotel announced for Australia & Ibis for King Street Wharf

Australia's largest hotel group, Accor, announced today that it would launch its new 5-star Pullman brand in Australia, with the Pullman Sydney Olympic Park scheduled to open in August 2008. It will be the only 5-star hotel to open in Sydney this decade.

Accor also announced the only new-build hotel to open in the Sydney central business district this decade - Ibis King Street Wharf, which is currently under construction and is planned for opening by the end of 2008.

First Pullman Hotel for Australia

Pullman Sydney Olympic Park is being developed by Tourism Asset Holdings Limited (TAHL), Australia's largest hotel ownership company, of which Accor is a minor shareholder.

Pullman is one of the great names in hospitality, best known for its association with the luxurious railway carriages that changed the face of overnight accommodation on trains in America, the UK and Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. Accor acquired the brand name in the early 1990s as part of its purchase of the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits.

Accor is using the Pullman name for a new upscale hotel brand that will be positioned between the newly upgraded Sofitel luxury brand and the well-established 4-star Novotel brand. The announcement of the Pullman Sydney Olympic Park is part of a global launch of the brand that will initially include 50 Pullman hotels in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and South America. The first Pullman hotel opened recently in Bangkok. It is envisaged that the brand will comprise 300 hotels by 2015.

The Pullman brand is principally aimed at corporate and meetings business, which makes the brand ideal for the Sydney Olympic Park destination, which is Sydney's fastest growing commercial and events precinct.

The contemporary 18 storey, 212 room Pullman will include 14 suites, 340 square metres of conference space plus pre-function areas (for up to 220 delegates), a boardroom, Pullman executive floor and lounge, lobby 'chill out' area, 24 hour gym, business centre, 24 hour IT solutions manager, restaurant and bar, and underground car parking with 130 spaces. The hotel's interior design is by Joseph Pang.

Like the adjacent Novotel and Ibis hotels, the new Pullman will be a pacesetter for environmental standards. The hotel will use 40% less energy than most equivalent 5-star hotels, with solar panels on the rooftop supplementing power consumption. A specific focus in the hotel construction has been on the selection of natural materials, with priority on building products with recyclable and recycled materials. 80% of water used in the construction of the hotel is targeted to be re-cycled.

The existing hotels, which were opened in 2000, and the new Pullman, will service the rapidly growing business and meetings community in the Olympic Park precinct and the greater western Sydney area. Sydney Olympic Park is currently home to over 60 businesses including Orlando Wyndham, Dairy Farmers, QBE, BP Solar and Eveready. These will be joined by a number of other major businesses over the next two years, including the Commonwealth Bank, which has already relocated 1400 staff to Sydney Olympic Park earlier this year and will grow their presence to 5000 employees by the end of the decade. Elsewhere in the surrounding region, companies such as ANZ, National Australia Bank, Macquarie Bank and AAP have moved to this burgeoning commercial district.

Sydney Olympic Park is also a major venue for conferences, exhibitions, entertainment and sporting events.

Accor Asia Pacific Managing Director, Michael Issenberg, said the new hotel highlighted the success of Sydney Olympic Park and the vision behind the development of the precinct.

'Sydney Olympic Park has been an outstanding success, despite some initial scepticism about the precinct's viability after the Olympics,' said Mr Issenberg.

'By the year 2025 it is anticipated that Sydney Olympic Park will support a daily population of over 20,000 workers, so the launch of the Pullman will play an important role in supporting this rapid growth. The region has had no new hotel for over seven years and demand for top-end accommodation is particularly strong.

'Pullman brings to Sydney's West a great name in hospitality, with an enviable reputation for quality and innovation. When Pullman Sydney Olympic Park opens in August, it will join Pullmans in countries such as France, Germany, Brazil, China and Thailand and will be part of one of the world's fastest growing hotel networks.'

Accor is also opening a Formule 1 hotel at Sydney Olympic Park in 2008, which will bring the number of rooms operated by Accor at Sydney Olympic Park to over 600.

Hotel Ibis King Street Wharf

The eight-storey, 91-room hotel, on the corner of Erskine and Shelley Streets, is also being developed by Tourism Asset Holdings Ltd (TAHL).

The new Ibis will be part of a combined retail and hotel development that will cover approximately 1490 square metres of prime real estate on the corner of Shelley and Erskine Streets at King Street Wharf.

King Street Wharf has become one of Sydney's leading restaurant, bar, entertainment and retail areas in the past decade, and is within five minutes walk of many of the city's leading business houses, including the corporate headquarters of American Express, Westpac and KPMG.

The site will be an ideal base for domestic and international leisure travellers, with easy access to the city, Cockle Bay and Darling Harbour. Ferry and charter cruise services are available from King St Wharf, and the Wynyard train and bus interchange is 300 metres from the hotel site.

The launch of the Kings St Wharf hotel is part of a region-wide expansion of Accor's premier economy hotel brand, Ibis, says Accor Asia Pacific Managing Director, Michael Issenberg.

'It is significant that the only new build hotel to open in the CBD this decade is an economy-sector hotel,' said Mr Issenberg.

'While many of the city's upscale hotels such as the Sofitel Wentworth Sydney have been extensively refurbished and upgraded, the cost of CBD land has made the development of new-build hotels extremely prohibitive.

'On the other hand, economy hotels such as Ibis put their major emphasis on rooms, rather than restaurants and meeting space, so while the block of land is relatively compact, its design maximises the room capacity, allowing us to offer a very competitive rate for such a prestigious location.

'Accor has been one of very few hotel groups to have developed new hotels in Australia this decade. We have opened a number of new-build properties across the country this decade, and that will culminate with the opening of the 5-star Pullman and 2-star Formule 1 at Sydney Olympic Park in the second half of 2008. Where we believe demand exists, and where the project is viable, we will definitely look to develop further new hotels.

'Ibis is growing rapidly as a brand across the Asia Pacific region. This month we have already opened an Ibis in Melbourne's Glen Waverley, and our fifth Ibis in New Zealand in Hamilton.

'We anticipate having over 100 Ibis hotels under development in China within the next three years and the brand is also growing rapidly in Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Korea.

'The brand's development mirrors the expansion of low-cost airlines, which have created a new market of business and leisure traveller, who may not have otherwise travelled,. And Ibis is the ideal brand for these travellers.

'Accor has a long association with Sydney's waterfront precinct, having played a key role in the development of Darling Harbour in the 1990s. The opening of the Novotel, Ibis and Grand Mercure hotels in the 1990s helping establish the precinct as the city's leading conference, exhibition and tourist area.

'Now the group will play a pivotal role in the growth of the East Darling Harbour precinct, which in the next ten years will see the conversion of the adjacent dock area into a commercial, leisure and residential hub, further increasing demand for the Ibis hotel.'

Since launching in 1974, Ibis has revolutionised the economy hotel market and become the standard bearer for this sector. There are currently more than 770 Ibis hotels worldwide, with 36 hotels in the Asia Pacific including 12 in Australia. Ibis hotels are renowned throughout the world for their quality, simplicity and value for money and are typically located in central business districts and major regional and suburban areas.

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