

Housing set to race ahead as Hamton hits the track

MACKENZIE SCOTT

Post-election political certainty and a relaxation of lending restrictions by the banking regulator will bring forward the end of the housing downturn, says Melbourne's Hamton Development Group, which is poised to launch 2000 apartments at the Moonee Valley racetrack redevelopment.

Managing director Matt Malseed said the positive economic mood generated by Scott Morrison's shock win at the weekend, reflected in a stockmarket surge on Monday, would probably be amplified by the combination of a lowering of APRA's 7.25 per cent lending buffer rate and a likely interest rate cut next month.

"Potentially, I think, when you combine the removal of uncertainty with the election result, the change with the APRA assessment rate policy and if interest rates come down, the combination of those would appear to be something that will support the market, certainly, and then hopefully bring an earlier end to the downturn," Mr Malseed said.

The market developments have come at the right time for Hamton, which will soon be out of the gates with the first stage of the Moonee Valley Racecourse redevelopment in Melbourne's northwest.

The 10 to 15-year project plans to have 2000 apartments and new public land in its early stages. The 40ha site, purchased in a joint

venture with superannuation fund Hostplus, has been in the masterplan stage since 2017, undergoing considerable community consultation.

Mr Malseed said the development was looking to offer a project of lasting significance.

"Host Plus ... are also really

keen to create a legacy for the community, which means that what we deliver on the 40ha site isn't just a traditional hit-and-run developer job. It is the creation of a real legacy for future generations development in Melbourne, and we feel incredibly lucky."

The project is set to launch in the coming months.

APRA's changes have been wholeheartedly welcomed by economists and industry, who

have long blamed stringent lending conditions for being behind the falling property market.

Brisbane buyers agent Meighan Hetherington said the 7.25 per cent loan serviceability rate was unfair and it had a significant impact outside the overblown Sydney and Melbourne markets.

"It will give buyers the opportunity to buy a better quality product in a better location," she said.

Ms Hetherington said first-home buyers would be better placed and able to borrow more without the pressure to buy at the peak of the housing boom.

Sydney property king Harry Triguboff is so confident in the market he will scrap planned discounts on his new Meriton apartments and will no longer offer a

10 per cent reduction on units already on the market. He believes the Coalition win, when partnered with a rate cut, will attract buyers and push up prices.

"The buyers didn't know whether to go ahead or not, but once they saw the results of the election, they are going ahead," Mr Triguboff said.

Mayfield Property Buyers Agent director John Carew said the developments this week have probably brought forward the end of the downturn by a few months, with the bottom potentially al-

ready a thing of the past.

"I think the change will be quite positive," Mr Carew said. "The market won't jump up 5 or 10 per cent but it will improve buyer and vendor confidence."