



Project under way: Ross Hyde, left, and Craig Ross in the Calibre Boats shed at Helensville.

More jobs for Helensville

A MULTI-MILLION dollar marine industrial park and a 100-berth marina planned for Helensville is expected to create hundreds of jobs.

The Waypoint Industrial Park is proposed on 19 hectares of farmland bordered on three sides by the Kaipara River at the northwest end of the town near State Highway 16.

Development has started on the \$150 million estate, which could take a decade to complete.

Developer Waypoint Industrial Park is owned by boatbuilder Craig Ross, whose company Calibre Boats NZ is in Whenuapai. He will be the first tenant of the new industrial park.

The 10-year vision of Mr Ross and Calibre Boats chief executive officer Olaf van Daal is to create a first-class industrial precinct that will bring high-calibre industry to Helensville.

The \$8.5m stage one development to build Calibre Boats' new home – two boatbuild-

ing sheds totalling 4200 square metres – is due for completion in February.

Costing a similar amount, stage two comprises 22 units covering 4600 square metres, beginning early next year and due for completion later in 2008.

Mr Ross says the industrial park and marina development could have come unstuck had it not been for the help of finance brokers Global Pacific Corporation, which secured the funding, and the Rodney Economic Development Trust and the Rodney District Council, which helped navigate regulatory requirements.

"We got in touch with Global Pacific Corporation finance broker Ross Hyde and he threw us the lifeline to access the financing to get the project started," Mr Ross says.

Rodney Economic Development Trust business chief executive officer Valerie Freeman says it welcomes export-generating businesses into the area.

"Calibre Boats is an employer offering skilled jobs and career pathways, which is especially helpful for Helensville, where there aren't very many jobs."

The company, founded by Mr Ross in 2002, employs 40 staff which will make it one of Helensville's biggest employers when it moves there.

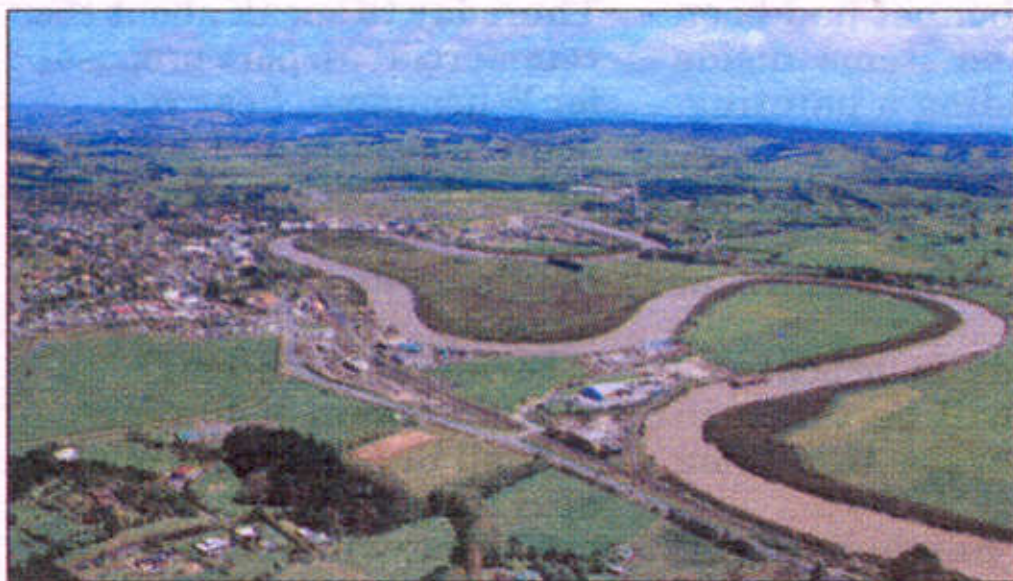
Calibre Boats built Earthrace, the bio-fuel-powered boat that this year came close to achieving a record-breaking circumnavigation of the globe.

It also makes moulded

fibreglass water taxis and is negotiating with Middle Eastern and Australian interests for fleets of water taxis.

Mr van Daal, who joined the company in July 2006, says one of the world's largest marina developers is interested in developing a dry dock and marina that he believes would be the only one on New Zealand's west coast.

"We can only finance part of it so we will take it step-by-step, but ultimately we believe the value of the fully developed industrial estate will be about \$150m."



Development site: The marine industry park under way in the Kaipara River bow north of Helensville township.

Photo Aerial Imagery.