

Wirra Wirra's grand plan for \$30m luxury resort

ASHLEIGH PISANI



PARTNERSHIP: Wirra Wirra managing director Andrew Kay and the McLaren Vale winery.



POOLSIDE: An artist's impression of the proposed \$30m hotel at Wirra Wirra in McLaren Vale.

PLANS for the first five-star luxury hotel in McLaren Vale have been lodged with Onkaparinga Council.

Australian developer Greaton, in partnership with Wirra Wirra, wants to build a \$30 million resort at the Strout Rd winery.

The resort would be built among the vineyards near the heritage property that once belonged to Wirra Wirra founder Robert Wigley.

That building would be used as a bridal suite.

There would be nine new double-storey buildings and Sparrow's Lodge, the vacant building at the winery entrance, would be turned into a reception area.

A pool, a wellness centre and a function hall would also be included in the development.

Wirra Wirra managing director Andrew Kay said the design showed great empathy with the existing surroundings.

"To introduce the first fivestar resort operation in McLaren Vale is not just a coup for us, but a catalyst for job creation, upskilling and growth in the region," Mr Kay said.

"The knock-on effect to local businesses and suppliers cannot be underestimated and I look forward to seeing the economic and community benefits from this investment in wine tourism."

Greaton managing director Nicho Teng said the resort would be unique in South Australia.

"South Australia, and particularly the McLaren Vale region, well and truly deserves a high-end resort like this," Mr Teng said.

"We are also very excited to be negotiating with an international wellness-oriented resort operator who also have no current presence in Australia.

"While we are not in a position to reveal who they are just yet, we can say they operate some of the most renowned resorts and hotels around the world."

In an Australian first, Bangkok/Singapore-based luxury resort architects Blink Design have designed the hotel.

McLaren Vale is about 40km south of Adelaide and is world-famous for its wineries.

If approved, construction would begin in November 2020 and was expected to be completed by July 2022.