

MEDIA RELEASE

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Historic Post Office redevelopment catalyst for Ipswich Central rejuvenation

Ipswich's heritage listed Post Office and adjoining London Pharmacy building are to be restored to their former glory with a Queensland based development group rebuilding the historic site as multi-use quality office and retail space.

Tower Central is a \$30 million joint venture between Queensland developers De Martini & John Fletcher Properties Group and Rohrig Properties.

It will offer a total of 4400m² of high quality retail and commercial space for the city and provide a catalyst for the rejuvenation of Ipswich Central

At the rear of the buildings, a new six storey office tower will be constructed, offering up to 3200m² of quality office space.

"Tower Central will provide the CBD with a fresh retail drawcard and will deliver an estimated 200 workers into the city centre," project spokesman John De Martini said.

The joint venture partners have recently completed the old McDonnell and East department store redevelopment in George Street Brisbane and Mr De Martini said the Ipswich project was another exciting opportunity for the companies to help preserve the built heritage of Queensland.

"Ipswich has a rich and colourful past that deserves to be celebrated," he said.

"The Post Office was completed in 1901 and is one of only three surviving grand post offices which were built in Queensland around Federation.

Tower Central coincides with a rigorous campaign by the Ipswich City Council to revitalise the city centre through intensive marketing and new infrastructure development.

The developers have lodged a development application with Ipswich City Council and plan to start construction in March 2008.

Mr De Martini said the redevelopment would preserve and restore the facade and clock tower of the Post Office and create new boutique retail premises in the open plan ground-floor of the building.

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“Upstairs, new office spaces will feature glimpses of the original structure including classic order columns, ceilings and staircases.

“Next door, the post-1970s shop fronts and intrusive roller shutter of the London Pharmacy building will be removed to make way for contemporary retail spaces and a replica of the original street awning.”

He said the lower floor of both buildings would make the most of their heritage features while providing fresh, new spaces for fashion retailers and boutique food shops.

“The design of the building will provide a sympathetic facelift to the streetscape.

Architect James Forbes (Blueprint) has also designed high quality office spaces within a new and contemporary building and improved pedestrian links between Brisbane and Limestone Streets.

Prominent local heritage architect Bruce Buchanan, has been commissioned to provide heritage advice for the redevelopment.

Tower Central is being leased by Jeff Litte of Savills (retail) and Jason Hines of Knight Frank (commercial).