



MEDIA RELEASE

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Construction starts on Queensland's biggest urban renewal

History in the making – RNA Showgrounds Regeneration Project begins

After seven years of planning, construction on the world class \$2.9 billion RNA Showgrounds Regeneration – the largest urban renewal project in Queensland - will start this week.

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh officially launched the project in Brisbane today which is projected to deliver more than 2,000 jobs and \$300 million a year in economic benefits to Queensland.

As part of the official launch, the Premier unveiled the design of the first stage of the project – the transformation of the iconic Industrial Pavilion - known to the public as the showbag pavilion - into a \$59 million convention and exhibition centre. The new centre will importantly retain the key heritage facades built in 1937.

“This is one of Brisbane’s landmark historic precincts but after more than 70 years it’s desperately in need of a facelift,” Ms Bligh said.

“This transformation will revitalise the area reflecting the modern, cosmopolitan Brisbane while at the same time protecting an important part of our history.

“It also provides the inner city with a major economic boost while creating thousands of jobs.

“This is a project that has been able to get off the ground because the government has facilitated the RNA’s \$59 million funding contribution to the redevelopment of the Industrial Pavilion through a loan from Queensland Treasury Corporation when private finance for projects of this scope is not readily available.”

RNA Chief Executive Jonathan Tunny said the regeneration of the RNA Showgrounds - a famous landmark synonymous with Queensland’s social heritage and culture - represented an historic milestone for Brisbane and was a once in a lifetime project.

“This is an important project for the state as it safeguards the legacy of the 22 hectare site, the home of the beloved Royal Queensland Show (Ekka), while also transforming the grounds into a lifestyle and cultural hub for the community to access all year round,” he said.

“The project will ensure the Ekka remains at the RNA Showgrounds making Brisbane one of the only Royal Shows in Australia to maintain its country and city links by holding the show right here at its original inner city location.

“It also means the Ekka’s history, traditions and unique atmosphere will be preserved by upgrading and replacing venues to provide state-of-the-art facilities.”

Mr Tunny said stage one construction works would result in some locational changes for attractions such as showbags at the Ekka.

“Showbags will remain a major part of the Ekka, and will be housed in a purpose built \$1.3 million facility offering the same great range as previously, and will be located in the sideshow alley entertainment precinct,” he said.



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Mark Menhinnitt, Chief Executive Officer of Lend Lease in Australia - the RNA's development partner - said the company was excited about starting work on this transformational project.

"After two years of working closely with the RNA to turn this vision into reality, our project team is eager to get on site and start work from this Friday," he said.

"It's very fitting that the iconic Industrial Pavilion, the home of the Ekka showbags, is the first building to be revitalised. Its conversion into a world class convention centre will set the scene for the renewal of this entire precinct, creating a vibrant extension to the Brisbane CBD."

The 15-year regeneration project represents the largest Brownfield development of its kind in Australia and includes 416,000m² of new residential, commercial and retail buildings. Lend Lease will construct the revitalised Industrial Pavilion and other RNA facilities as well as develop 5.5 hectares of land into future residential, commercial and retail space.

Mr Tunny said the regeneration of the RNA Showgrounds meant the site was finally getting the facelift it deserved and would become a destination synonymous with events, fashion, design, lifestyle and culture, hosting events and shows all year round.

The RNA Showgrounds Regeneration Project involves:

- 340,000m² of new residential, commercial and retail development located on 5.5 hectares around the extremities of the RNA site, together with 76,000m² within the RNA site
- New large animal pavilions
- Upgrading the pavilions, ovals and stands
- Linking neighbouring precincts and suburbs with cycle and walking paths
- Providing a hotel to accommodate Brisbane's business and tourist visitors
- An urban community consisting of commercial, retail and residential buildings

Stage one works include:

- Industrial Pavilion to be transformed into a 22,000m² convention and exhibition centre
- \$7 million in enabling infrastructure works to improve stormwater and sewer works.
- Design and development of Fresh Food Markets
- Design and development of Grand Parade and Ekka Plaza
- Design and development of the first residential and commercial precinct
- Design and development of a hotel

Other major stages will occur over the 15 years including design and construction of a cattle pavilion and horse pavilion and further residential, commercial and retail development.

Mr Tunny said the new convention and exhibition centre would total 22,000m², an increase of 10,000m², and house a variety of exhibitions and events on a year round basis.

"It will include a large exhibition hall, a public car park comprises upto 280 spaces, a large commercial kitchen, meeting and board rooms and the RNA's new office," he said.

****News editors please note – full media kit is available at www.rna.org.au or <http://www.rnaredevelopment.lendlease.com/>**

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