# Historic wool stores to aid Port Adelaide uplift

#### **RICHARD EVANS**

THE sale of two former wool stores in Port Adelaide's historic commercial precinct is being hailed as yet another example of an underlying and forthcoming property boom, says a leading Adelaide agent.

LJH Commercial's David Buenfeld is behind the recent off market sales, for \$4.5 million, of the state heritage listed 318-326 St Vincent Street and 27-32 Crozier Street in Port Adelaide. Buyer the Ginos Group last year paid \$1.5 million for another 1880s built wool store next to Dock One at Port Adelaide.

"We have seen increased sales activity in Port Adelaide over the past 12 to 18 months, and we expect this activity will continue to improve on the back of the State Government's recent announcement of its master plan for 40ha of waterfront land to be split into six parcels for redevelopment," said Mr Buenfeld.

The potential of the area, to perhaps be transformed in a central Melbourne-style repositioning, is immense, Mr Buenfeld said.

"Port Adelaide remains one of the few heritage areas in the country as far as a conglomeration of buildings," he said. "The Docklands have been repurposed to this effect. People look at Port Adelaide and think 'what can we do there?' It's a long-term investment but there is some very affordable commercial property in Port Adelaide at the moment.

"The challenge as always is the population, though we are seeing a lot more tourists going to Port Adelaide, backpackers are going there, accommodation is more affordable. Maybe Port Adelaide needs a university to bring people to the area and keep them there.'

The importance of Port Adelaide as SA's first state heritage area, and containing its most substantial and continuous group of colonial buildings, should not be underestimated in a commercial development context, he said.

"The former wool stores are notable landmarks with historical, economic and social importance. The former Elders Smith & Co woolstore 'D' at St Vincent Street is on the state heritage listed register, while the former Elders Goldsborough Mort 'C' Store at Crozier Street is listed as a contributory item," Mr Buenfeld said.

Port Adelaide was the centre of wool buying and selling in SA in the late nineteenth century, with wool classed and sold at Port Adelaide ready for shipment from the adjacent docks. The first wool store to be erected was Elder Smith &



NEW LEASE OF LIFE: The former Elders Smith & Co woolstore at St Vincent St and, inset, David Buenfeld.

Co's in 1880 and directly opposite the newly-opened Port Adelaide Dock. The future use of the two recently sold woolstores is unknown, however.

Currently leased, the stores have immediate potential for

commercial enterprises or future potential to capitalise on planned transformation of the area from its industrial history to a contemporary multipurpose area with a strong local economy, Mr Buenfeld said.

He said it is expected that the stores will be preserved for adaptive reuse.

The government's development plan envisages a mix of uses for the stores, whereby the internal adaptation of the

stores is appropriate for a new use while preserving the external form," he said.

There are more immediate possibilities. "A microbrewery perhaps," suggested Mr Buenfeld. "Good for tourism."

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