

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn



MEDIA RELEASE

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CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP GIVES GREEN LIGHT TO “CATHEDRAL PRECINCT” AT MANUKA

A major redevelopment of the St Christopher’s Cathedral precinct at Manuka has been given the go ahead by the Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, Christopher Prowse.

The Archbishop said the project to transform and beautify the area would see “the Catholic Church in the midst of the community”.

“Manuka is a popular gathering space with cafes, cinemas and a sporting precinct,” Archbishop Prowse said. “This will place a Catholic precinct right in the centre of that, offering people a reminder of our Christian values which cannot be sidelined.”

The \$35 million project has been planned for many years but is now urgent given the derelict state of the Haydon Centre. The Church also needs modern offices to co-locate agency and admin staff, who currently work in different parts of Canberra. The Catholic Education Office is opposite the Cathedral.

“The Haydon Centre is derelict and the CatholicCare offices are also very run down,” Archbishop Prowse said. “The presbytery, which already needs a major renovation, will also be demolished.

“The cost is not insignificant but necessary. Like any organisation, the Church needs modern offices and we need to work smartly and efficiently. This redevelopment will enable us to improve our operations so that we can better carry out our role to spread the Gospel and help and support people.”

The redevelopment will comprise two three-storey, office buildings connected by an atrium to maximise light and ventilation. There will be a meeting hall and parish offices. The complex will connect to the Cathedral by a piazza to provide community space, and there will be underground parking for the entire site. Forty-four independent living units (ILUs) will also be built.

The ILUs will provide an income stream and be managed by a Catholic Church agency. The project will also be funded by rental income from current Archdiocesan assets. Building should start within months and be finished by the end of 2016.

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