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Wednesday 18 February

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MEDIA RELEASE

The future of the Esplanade Hotel is assured: Becton

Leading developer, Becton Corporation Pty Ltd, announced today that the Esplanade Hotel, St Kilda, will stay as it stands. The hotel will become the cornerstone of a landmark development for the remainder of the site.

Adopting the recommendation of an independent panel, Becton has resolved to retain the Esplanade Hotel exactly as it is today.

The panel was asked to consider the submissions of leading architectural firms who proposed strategies for redevelopment of the Esplanade as part of an urban planning design competition set up by Becton.

“We bought the Espy site because we thought it was special and of state significance,” said Mr Max Beck, Chairman of Becton.

“We believe this process has delivered a design solution which creates a landmark building for St Kilda while retaining the physical and essential character of the Espy.”

Evan Walker, former State Minister for Planning, and one of Victoria’s foremost experts in architectural and planning matters, chaired the independent panel. Other members of the panel included Haig Beck, Professor of Design, University of Melbourne, St Kilda born entertainer, Ronnie Burns and Don Fitzpatrick, owner of the Dog’s Bar and St Kilda resident.

“Through the establishment of an independent panel, Becton has demonstrated its commitment to sensitive, creative and progressive design for the vital St Kilda area,” said Mr Walker.

“The process Becton has undergone to reach this stage sets an example for other developers throughout Melbourne.

“This development will provide a focal point for the St Kilda area, sitting as it does on the axis of the St Kilda pier. At the same time we are able to retain a much loved icon in the Esplanade hotel.”

Of the nine schemes proposed by the designers, two required the demolition of the Esplanade. These submissions were rejected.

“The design concept for the Esplanade Hotel site retains the affordable and accessible characteristic of the Espy,” said Mr Hamish Macdonald, a Director of Becton.

A building of a similar scale will be built beside the hotel with a residential tower building constructed within the body of the site.

“The Espy will continue to be operated as it is today, by the same management and offering a diverse mix of live music, comedy and food,” Mr Macdonald said.

The renowned Melbourne architectural firm, Nation Fender Katsalidis, submitted the scheme recommended by the panel and now accepted by Becton.

The residential tower will feature modern, but classic lines, designed to complement the St Kilda landscape, according to Nonda Katsalidis of Nation Fender Katsalidis.

Becton purchased the Esplanade site from Carlton and United Breweries in August 1997.

“St Kilda is a major state asset which has been neglected over the years and damaged by poor planning controls, particularly in the 1960’s and 70’s,” said Mr Beck.

The proposed design is currently at concept stage and details will be defined as Becton continues the consultative process.

For further information:

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Corporate Kudos

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