

*The*

ROYAL

GEORGE

**ROYAL GEORGE HOTEL REVITALISATION**

Information and Frequently Asked Questions



The Royal George Hotel has been a much-loved icon of the George Street Precinct since it was built during the gold rush era in 1903 and thrived for many years until 1979. Although now deserted, the Hotel is arguably the most important heritage building in the Town of East Fremantle.

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Since closing, it has had many occupants including an art gallery, restaurant, artists' studios and community spaces. Owned by the West Australian Government between 2010 and 2016, and under the stewardship of the National Trust, the building was left vacant and significantly deteriorated through lack of maintenance and use.

In June 2017 Saracen Properties purchased the Royal George and engaged prominent Fremantle architect Michael Patroni of Spaceagency. The aim of this partnership is to undertake a full heritage restoration of the Hotel to create a first-class hospitality venue and residential accommodation offering.

To revitalise the Royal George Hotel site it is proposed to:

- Undertake a full restoration of the heritage listed hotel
- Re-open the hotel including a bar, restaurant and boutique function rooms
- Develop high quality residential apartments adjacent to the hotel
- Reinvigorate and beautify the public realm surrounding the Royal George

# PROPOSED RESTORATION OF THE HERITAGE HOTEL

The project is being driven by a desire to undertake a faithful heritage restoration and rejuvenation of this outstanding example of a gold rush era hotel. Saracen Properties wish to return the Royal George to its former glory, including the original usage – as a licensed venue, community meeting place and boutique accommodation.

Spaceagency architects has been engaged to restore the heritage building and design the interior spaces to create a hospitality experience that's among Perth's best. The hotel restoration will allow the community to once again have access to the Royal George and enable them to fully enjoy the venue.

The proposed use of the Hotel will include:

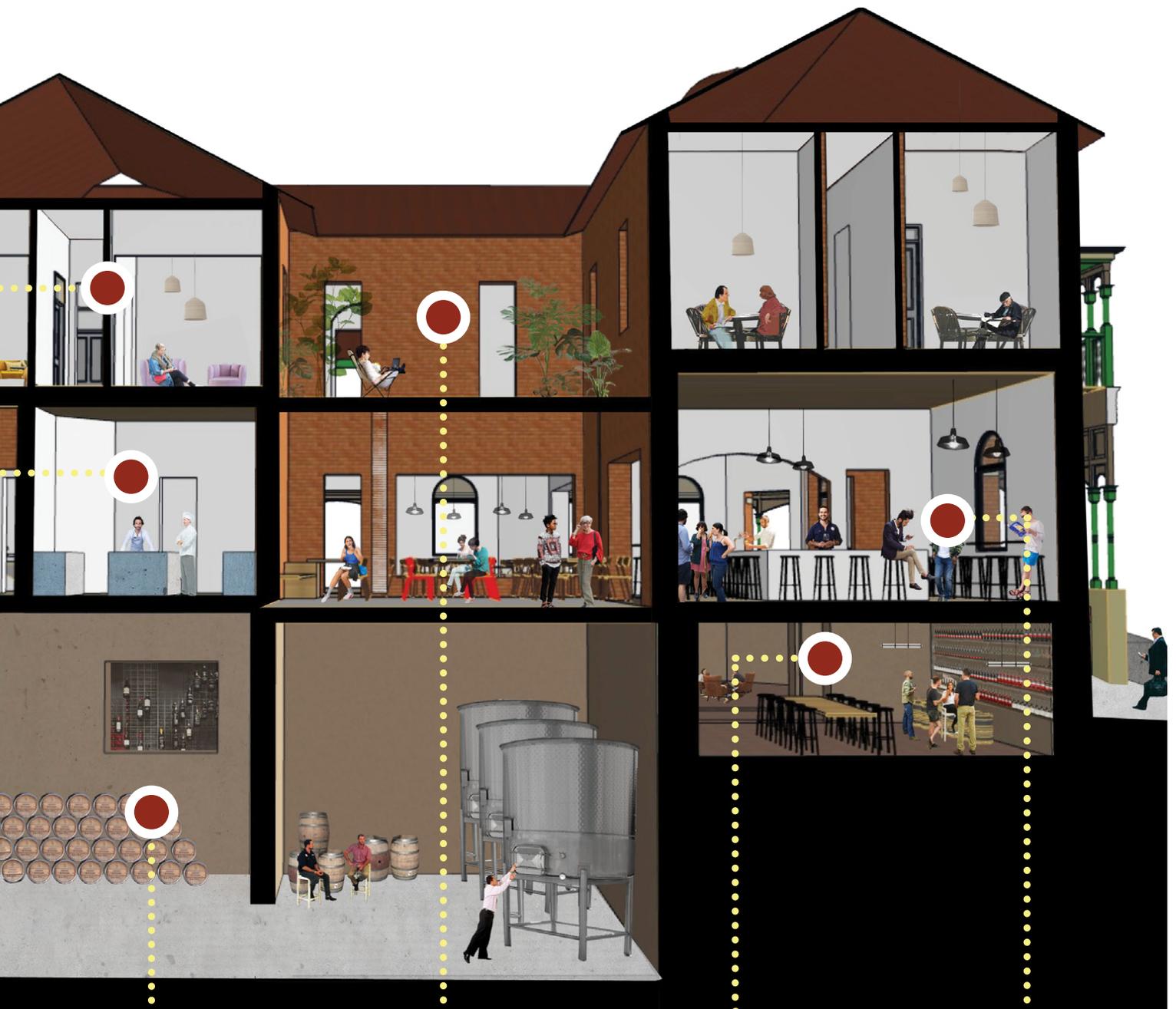
- An urban distillery
- Premium licensed venue
- Restaurant & café facilities
- Function rooms



PRIVATE DINING

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN





**DISTILLERY**

**COURTYARD**

**CELLAR DOOR**

**BAR/RESTAURANT**



An aerial photograph of a residential and commercial area. A large, irregularly shaped site is highlighted in yellow. The site is located between a road on the left and a road on the right, with a large green area to its north. The surrounding area consists of residential houses with various roof colors and some commercial buildings. The highlighted site contains a building with a red roof.

# Proposed Residential Development

The extensive restoration and re-opening of the Royal George Hotel will be funded through the development of residential accommodation at the open area to the north of the Hotel.

Saracen Properties and Spaceagency are committed to an elegant residential building of high quality and contemporary design that complements and brings focus to the Royal George Hotel. The building will provide visual interest and interaction with Duke Street, whilst maximising the open space available at the rear of the property.

This design approach is consistent with other award-winning developments, where contemporary buildings sit alongside older buildings to reinforce the heritage value through a juxtaposition of the old and the new in design harmony.

This site is well-suited for higher density mixed-used development, in that it is conveniently located close to Stirling Highway, only one side interfaces with other residences and it will contribute positively to the George Street business hub.



## Proposed Public Realm Reinvigoration

In addition, Saracen Properties is proposing to revitalise the public realm surrounding the Royal George.

The proposal involves the redesign and upgrade of the Stirling Highway underpass on the George Street side. This will involve redesigning the access to the underpass and landscaping to provide a welcoming community space and an attractive end to George Street, reconnecting two parts of East Fremantle previously divided by Stirling Highway and the current underpass. The proposed upgrade is subject to approval by Main Roads WA.

# GROWING POPULATION AND THE PROVISION OF HOUSING

The Town of East Fremantle, like all local governments, will need to accommodate additional dwellings to meet State Government population targets by 2,800 residents in East Fremantle by 2036 (36% increase).

The proposed development provides an opportunity to do this in a key strategic location, reducing the need for increased density in suburban areas. This can result in the loss of suburban backyards, reduced tree canopy and less sustainable development.

*“The draft sub-regional strategy identifies a housing target for East Fremantle of an additional 900 dwellings by 2031. Additional dwellings will be required within the Town to assist in accommodating anticipated population growth within the Perth metropolitan area... The additional implications for the Town arising from this framework includes the need to focus these dwellings in and around high frequency public transport routes, such as Marmion Street and Canning Highway.”  
(Town of East Fremantle Local Planning Strategy 2016)*

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS

A diverse mix of land uses is required if a town centre is to sustain vibrancy, provide the public with a range of services and continue to attract visitors. The proposed revitalisation of the Royal George Hotel and residential development will enhance the activation of this important local hub and provide more diverse housing options in the Town of East Fremantle.

Potential benefits of the proposed restoration the hotel and development of the adjoining site will include:

- Restoration and rejuvenation of the Hotel to its former glory
- Allowing public and visitor access to one of the most important heritage buildings in East Fremantle
- Maximising heritage values
- Provision of small, boutique function spaces that provide social options for the general public
- Contributing to the liveliness of George Street with an increased local population, which will provide greater patronage of local businesses, more on-street activity and passive surveillance of public spaces

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## PROJECT TEAM

### Who is Saracen Properties?

Saracen Properties is a family owned property development business that was formed in 1993. Since its inception the company has owned and developed a large number of retail, hospitality, residential, industrial and commercial office projects, predominately in Western Australia. Over the past 23 years, Saracen Properties has successfully initiated and completed projects valued in excess of \$1.5 billion, including a number of key heritage restoration projects.

### Who is the architect?

Spaceagency Architects, headed by renowned Western Australian architect Michael Patroni, will design both the refurbishment of the Royal George Hotel and the neighbouring residential development. Spaceagency has

extensive experience in the rejuvenation of heritage properties as well as designing new developments.

Project designs undertaken by Spaceagency include: The Sail and Anchor Hotel (Fremantle), The Queens Hotel in Mount Lawley, Long Chim and Petition at the State Buildings (Perth), Alex Hotel (Northbridge), Bread in Common (Fremantle), Strange Company (Fremantle), the White Gum Valley Baugruppen project and many others, many of which demanded significant heritage expertise.

### Who are the town planners?

One of Australia's leading town planning firms, Urbis, has been engaged to undertake all the urban planning requirements of this project. Urbis has extensive experience in undertaking projects of this nature, including the Shenton Park Hospital Redevelopment (Montario Quarter) and WGV at White Gum Valley.

## **HOTEL RESTORATION**

### **What types of uses will be provided within the refurbished Hotel?**

The main aim is to restore and rejuvenate the Hotel to ensure ongoing access and engagement by the public as well as patrons. The following types of uses are proposed:

- Licensed bars including a boutique distillery/wine bar
- Restaurant/cafe
- Boutique function rooms

Note: there may be some rooms used for boutique hotel/short stay accommodation if there is considered to be sufficient demand.

### **Who will operate the Hotel?**

Saracen Properties is currently engaging with potential operators. These discussions are being held with respected local businesses, with the aim of ensuring all investments and jobs benefit the local and broader Western Australian community.

### **Will the public be able to access the refurbished Hotel?**

Yes. Saracen Properties intends to ensure that the Royal George Hotel, as one of the most important buildings in East Fremantle, re-opens as a publicly accessible building with a range of attractions that will foster positive engagement with the community. With the significant level of financial investment required to restore the hotel, Saracen Properties want to ensure the public has maximum opportunity to experience this restored icon.

### **How will the heritage value of the Hotel be protected?**

Prior to purchasing the Hotel, Saracen Properties and the Heritage Council of Western Australia (HCWA) entered into a Heritage Management Agreement which governs, among other things, the restoration of the Hotel, its ongoing maintenance and timeframes for the work to be complete.

The HCWA is a key stakeholder in this project and has indicated in initial discussions and presentations that they are supportive of the proposed restoration of the Hotel and for an adjoining residential development to occur. Further consultation with the HCWA will be initiated once feedback from the community is included within the project design process.

Furthermore, HCWA must give approval to the project prior to restoration commencing, including details such as colours, lighting materials, signage and uses.

## Will key features such as the cupola and balconies be retained?

Yes, all key heritage features will be retained and restored.

The Royal George Hotel has a unique design with many exemplary features of the gold rush era. These are important elements that give this pre-WW1 building character and contribute to the sense of place that community members feel towards the George Street precinct.

Other key heritage restoration works will include:

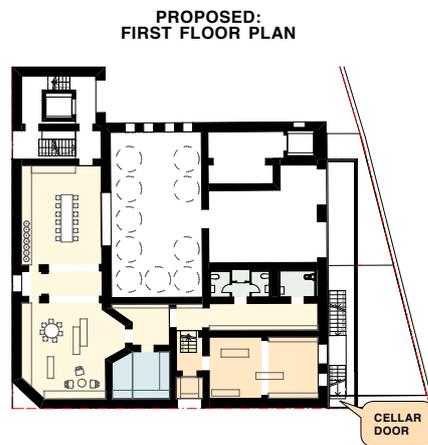
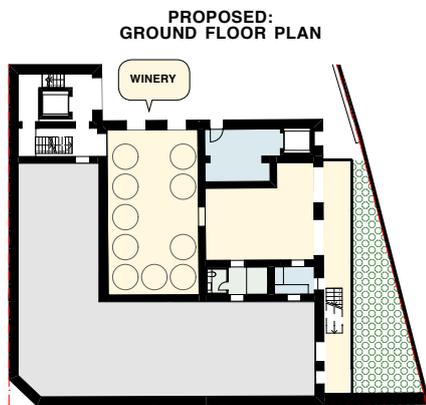
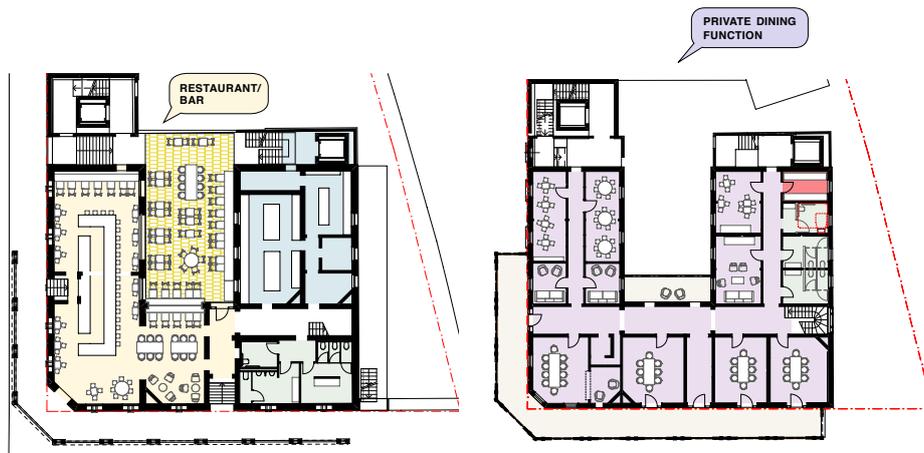
- Removal of non-original features
- Expose and refurbish original features previously covered up
- Reinstate original windows
- Replace galvanised roof and guttering
- Rebuild rear timber verandah
- Remove paint on brickwork and tuck and point brickwork
- Repaint stone masonry
- Refurbish zinc shingles on cupola
- Repoint chimney brickwork
- Refurbish cast iron balcony balustrading
- Refurbish timber detailing to verandah
- Rebuild column bases



## How will the restoration of the Hotel be funded?

Heritage restoration projects the scale of the Royal George Hotel are very expensive - the project has proven to be financially uneconomic for previous owners. The situation

remains the same for Saracen Properties hence sales from the neighbouring residential development is needed to fund the restoration costs of the Hotel.



**PROPOSED:  
LOWER BASEMENT PLAN**

**PROPOSED:  
UPPER BASEMENT PLAN**

## Will there be any changes to the internal layout of the Hotel?

The majority of rooms will remain in their current layout, completely refurbished and with heritage architectural detailing restored and exposed. Furthermore, the basement will be refurbished and opened for public access for the first time in the building's history.

It is proposed that boutique spaces will be made available to the public for appropriate social functions.

## How will surrounding access and amenity be enhanced?

The Hotel has been vacant for many years, so the restoration and re-opening will significantly improve the amenity of the area.

Access and public spaces surrounding the site will be enhanced through the proposed upgrade and re-design of the underpass from the George Street – Duke Street intersection to Silas Street, under Stirling Highway. This will provide a safer, more comfortable and more attractive link between the two sides of Stirling Highway, enhancing the connection between George Street and the Canning Highway town centre.

## PROPOSED APARTMENTS

The concept design proposes a podium development at the lower levels with a slender apartment tower above. The scale of the tower seeks to respect the design of the Hotel and provides a backdrop rather than competing with the lower height of Hotel. This design approach to developments next to heritage buildings has been successfully applied in other locations in the metropolitan area (Como - The Treasury at the State Buildings, City of Perth Library and Church House – Cathedral Heritage Precinct, Perth).

### How many apartments are proposed for the site and what types of dwelling will be provided?

The exact number of apartments hasn't been determined at this stage, however approximately 40 apartments are required in order to make the revitalisation of the Royal George Hotel viable. A mix of one, two and three bedrooms are proposed, with variations in floor designs to cater for single person households to families. All the apartments and common areas will be of the highest quality design and amenity.

### Why is a tall slender building proposed rather than a shorter, wider development?

In order to fund the refurbishment of the Royal George Hotel, approximately 40 apartments will be required.

The same number of apartments could be developed in a building approximately nine storeys, resulting in more bulk and massing immediately adjacent to the Hotel. This is not

considered an appropriate design response to the Hotel's heritage values hence the proposal for a lower podium and slender tower.

The benefits of developing a taller, more slender tower include:

- Better separation between the unique heritage of the Royal George Hotel and the new development
- Less bulk imposed on neighbouring Duke Street properties
- Less impact from overshadowing as the longer but narrower shadow is cast primarily over Stirling Highway
- Accommodating all parking on-site

### Was a design study of a shorter, wider building undertaken?

A study was done to determine if a shorter and wider building would provide the best design outcome. **Ultimately it was not considered the best design, due to:**

- Having a uniform footprint across multiple levels, creating a bulkier appearance
- Casting a greater shadow surrounding the development
- Having a greater visual impact and lack of separation with the Hotel
- Not being able to accommodate all carparking on-site



### **Will it cost less to develop the tall slender building?**

No. Developing the same number of apartments in a tall slender building is more expensive than in a shorter, wider building. Australian building regulations require higher construction standards for tall buildings leading to significantly increased building costs.

### **Why propose a taller slender design, when it costs more?**

The primary focus of this project is to deliver the highest quality design outcome to create an attractive and iconic building that will stand the test of time. The project team believe that a taller slender tower represents the best design outcome when viewed in context with the adjacent heritage building and the wider neighbourhood. The taller slender building will also enable all car parking to be accommodated on-site, this is not possible with a shorter, bulkier building. Therefore Saracen have determined it is worth investing more funds to develop a taller, slender building.

### **How might the development benefit local businesses?**

It is envisaged that the development will increase the local population and draw in patrons from outside the immediate area, thereby increasing the patronage of local businesses and enhancing the local economy.

### **How might the development benefit the residents?**

The reopening of the Hotel will provide residents additional quality local hospitality options, while restoring the much-loved building. In addition, the improvements to the public realm will offer natural meeting places for the community.

### **How will traffic and parking be managed at the new building and will the road access change?**

It is proposed that car parking will be contained on site - this includes the use of an internal car stacker for residents.

Vehicle access to the development will be from Duke Street at approximately the same location as the existing driveway.

### **Will any trees be removed?**

Existing trees on the site will need to be removed. Saracen Properties understands the importance of trees and other vegetation to create an environment that supports health and wellbeing. Investigations are being made into the potential relocation of some of the trees. The open spaces within the development will be landscaped to a high specification using vegetation that is appropriate to the setting. Furthermore, improvements to the underpass adjacent to the hotel will include natural landscaping features.

## STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### What stakeholders has Saracen engaged with so far?

The Saracen Properties project team have already had discussions with the following stakeholders about the proposed revitalisation of the site:

- Town of East Fremantle staff and elected members (including briefings; meetings; and site visit)
- Town of East Fremantle's Community Design Advisory Committee
- Hon Simone McGurk, MLA, Member for Fremantle
- State Departments and Agencies: Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
- Previous owners and managers, the National Trust
- The Heritage Council

Feedback received from all parties has been considered as part of the concept design process.

### How is Saracen Properties engaging with the community?

Saracen Properties recognises that the Hotel site holds a very special place in the community's consciousness and is focused on the property's reinvigoration so that it once again becomes a true community asset.

Saracen Properties also understands that engagement with the community is crucial to the ultimate success of the project and has appointed community engagement consultants Creating Communities to receive feedback from the community on the proposed revitalisation of the site.

Key consultation activities include meetings with neighbours, a forum with businesses and Community Open Days held on Friday 13 April (2pm-7pm) and Saturday 14 April (10am-2pm) at the Royal George Hotel. These Open Days provide the community with an opportunity to drop in at a time that suits, view the concept design, talk one-on-one with the project team and provide feedback. Creating Communities staff will produce a community consultation report to Saracen that will describe in detail all the feedback provided by stakeholders and the community.

### What will Saracen Properties do with the feedback from the community?

Saracen, with their planning and architectural team, will review the feedback from the community as part of the design process. The feedback will be considered alongside a range of factors including local regulations, site constraints, HCWA comments and financial considerations.

# NEXT STEPS

Pending the approvals process, it is anticipated that restoration and construction works will commence in 2019 and will be complete by 2021.

The initial process will include the following steps:

- Engagement with local residents, businesses, stakeholders and community.
- Finalisation of detailed designs. Once satisfied with the quality of the designs, Saracen will seek to lodge a development application with the Town of East Fremantle.
- Submission of a Development Application to the Town of East Fremantle. Due to the nature of the proposal, the State's Development Assessment Panel for the area will be the decision-making authority on the development application. At this stage it is anticipated a decision will be forthcoming in mid to late 2018.

If the Development Application is approved the next steps will include:

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Commence Hotel restoration

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Site works

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Commence construction of the apartments

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Fit out of the apartments

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Commissioning of equipment in the Hotel

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Training of venue staff

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Opening of the Royal George

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Apartment sales and settlement

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New residents start moving in

**It is estimated that the Hotel and apartments will be completed by 2021.**

