



Purchase of adjacent blocks paves way for \$105m Valley apartment project

Metro maps tower plan

Chris Herde

METRO Property Development has swooped on an inner-city parcel of land to build another of its signature high-rise apartment towers.

The company, headed by David Devine, has bought two adjoining sites at Fortitude Valley at 1 Commercial Rd and 977 Ann St.

Metro aims to build 200 to 210 apartments in a 15-storey tower in a project with a total value of \$105 million.

"Our vision for this site is to construct an iconic building that will become the gateway to the Brisbane CBD and instil pride in the people of Brisbane," Mr Devine said.

"We continue to see exceptional value in Brisbane's inner-city suburbs like Fortitude Valley and Bowen Hills with the availability of high-quality sites, sustainable building costs and good

demand from buyers."

Settlement is due in November 2012 and industry sources say Metro will pay \$10 million to \$11 million for the 2553sq m site.

Metro director Ken Woodley refused to comment on the sale price.

"But we are buying our properties for about 30 to 40 per cent cheaper than before the GFC ... and these two properties were no exception," he said.

The sales were negotiated by Elders Commercial's Carl Charalambous and Clinton Mallan.

The 1 Commercial Rd site was owned by Jera Constructions, which bought it in 2003 for \$1.975 million. It is occupied by a car dealership.

The smaller adjoining property was owned by International City Church Property Holdings, which bought it for

\$2.9 million in 2009.

Mr Woodley said marketing the new project should start in 12 to 14 months, after council approval.

The acquisition will take Metro's workbook of current and future apartment projects to 2200 units worth \$922 million.

Mr Woodley said in the past 12 months alone 682 apartments came on the development pipeline with 442 pre-sold.

"The Valley is currently undergoing a major transformation from an industrial precinct to a vibrant and eclectic inner-city residential suburb," he said.

"As a developer, it's an exciting place to build due its close proximity to the Brisbane CBD, easy access to transport and its thriving cultural scene, with trendy bars and clubs, restaurants and live music."



UNIT TOWER:
Carl Charalambous of Elders and Metro director Ken Woodley at 1 Commercial Rd, Newstead, where another high-rise apartment block is planned.

Picture: Peter McNamara