

A boutique makeover

Paris-salon plan for shabby site

JOHN MASANAUSKAS
CITY EDITOR

A CBD “eyesore” will be turned into a Parisian-style salon creating hundreds of jobs under plans before Melbourne City Council

Entertainment and hospitality outfit the O’Brien Group proposes to convert the run-down Job Warehouse building near the top of Bourke Street into a series of “fine boutique bespoke dining and artistic spaces”.

Built in the 1840s, the pre-Gold Rush strip of shops is the city’s oldest surviving retail premises.

O’Brien Group has resubmitted a permit application after considering issues raised by the council, Victoria Police and some residents.

Group CEO Michael Xavier O’Brien said in a submission Job Warehouse had great historical significance, but was regarded as “one of Melbourne’s



The Bourke Street building.

most prominent eyesores and embarrassments”.

“Our restoration will enhance the amenity of the site and the surrounding areas to a stylish and sophisticated precinct that all Melburnians will be justifiably proud of,” he said.

“My vision is to build a series of smaller fine boutique bespoke dining and artistic spaces within one business that are timeless, and will be loved and enjoyed by future generations.”

The project will include renovation of adjoining sites at 11-19 Liverpool Street and 10-26 Crossley Street. It will

have two “Venetian courtyards” designed by landscaper Paul Bangay, and is expected to create 500 construction jobs and more than 350 hospitality jobs when complete.

“We will build a place that transcends a hospitality venue — a true site of cultural exchange, like the great salons of 19th century Paris,” Mr O’Brien said.

“The development sends a clear message of positivity to the community and makes a statement that the Melbourne CBD is open for business and that the city will bounce back during these difficult times.”

O’Brien Group, whose venues include AAMI Park and O’Brien Group Arena in Docklands, has support for the project from the nearby Salvation Army Project 614 centre.

Owned by the Zeimer family, Job Warehouse’s current tenant is The Paperback bookshop.

john.masanauskas@news.com.au



AKOWSKI

MENT

mini investors
Whole Kids’
fruit bars,
and juices.
King and her
big fans of the
Kids, like
engages this year
of revenue due
being grounded.