

SPRINGVALE - DANDENONG

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FRONT PAGE

Go for \$286m shops

Retail | Baria Bol and Rebecca David

Harvey Norman, IKEA head project

SWEDISH homemaker giant IKEA will join Harvey Norman in building a massive \$286 million shopping complex in Springvale.

About 1500 jobs will be created in early 2012, when the retail centre opens on the corner of Princes Highway and Westall Rd.

The announcement is long overdue. Plans to build what was touted as Australia's biggest homemaker

centre were first outlined in 2007. Officials had expected it to open this year.

Harvey Norman senior property development manager David Scurr said the 8ha site, a former Telstra supply branch with contaminated soil, had initially proved difficult to develop.

"We spent 12 months and

\$9 million to clear the site up and in April 2008 EPA gave us the green light to go ahead with the plans," he said.

State Planning Minister Justin Madden last week met Greater Dandenong council representatives and developers to kick-start work on the centre, due to begin today.

The fast-tracking will rezone the land from Industrial to Business, paving the way for a greater diversity of retailers. Mr Scurr said Harvey Norman was actively pursuing more tenants for the centre.

"Increased tenancies will provide greater shopping choices in the 72,000sqm development, which will house a number of

homemaker-type stores," Mr Madden said. IKEA Australia manager David Hood said they were excited about the project - expected to house Australia's largest IKEA outlet, with 3000 parking spaces.

Greater Dandenong Mayor Jim Memeti said it was fantastic news.

"The decision to build a development of this scale in our city not only shows confidence in our local economy and our future, but also expands on Greater Dandenong's retail diversity," Cr Memeti said.

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