

## DW appointed as architects for €90 million retail development in Poland

Douglas Wallace architects, designers and project managers, have been appointed as the architects for a significant new retail development in Elbląg, Poland. The centre is being developed by Irish company Spirit International Poland.

Construction is due to commence early 2009 and is scheduled for completion by mid 2010. The new complex of 50,000 sq m will include a hypermarket, DIY store, home electrical store as well as 20,000 sq m of mall space with various shops and restaurants.

The shopping centre will be the first major retail development in the area. The city of Elbląg, which has 130,000 inhabitants, is favourably located near the Warsaw-Gdańsk motorway. The city is situated 60km from Tricity and 50km from the border with Russia.

Douglas Wallace specialises in the creation of commercial, retail, hotel and spa environments. The company was founded in 1980 and has offices in Dublin, Galway, Belfast and London.

Les Meldrum, Principal, Douglas Wallace, commented: "We are delighted to have secured this project for Spirit International Poland and look forward to creating a strong and distinctive shopping centre in the city of Elbląg. The development will be the biggest retail centre in the region in a good location on the outskirts of the city with proximity to the motorway. Douglas Wallace has strong expertise and depth of knowledge in retail developments and we have accentuated our skills to allow us to compete with the very best international firms."

At the heart of the centre Douglas Wallace have planned for an exciting food court and speciality retail and promotion area. The development is designed to maximise natural light and will use innovative sustainability principles to create the difference.

John Donnelly, CEO of Spirit International, says: "We are very excited about this development in Elbląg, a thriving city that still lacks a modern retail centre. Our discussions with retailers have been even better than we expected and the leasing of units will be a fast process."

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**About Douglas Wallace**

Douglas Wallace are one of Europe's leading specialists in the strategy and creation of branded retail environments. The practice has been established for 27 years and employs 157 staff in Dublin, Belfast, London and Galway. The company releases the full potential of clients' businesses by combining creativity with commercial savvy and has one of Europe's most creative cross-functional design teams with unique expertise in delivering successful and exciting projects.

Douglas Wallace works for a portfolio of international clients and is working extensively through out Eastern Europe including commercial and high quality residential projects in Poland Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Latvia.

Recent Irish projects include Johnston Court Sligo, Brown Thomas, Scotch Hall Drogheda, The Eye Cinema Galway, The Morrison Hotel and Edward Square Donnybrook.

The firm's UK clients also include Harrods, Bang & Olufsen, London Town Hotels, Debenhams, Habitat, Bradford and Bingley, Gap Holdings and Starbucks among others. The company is currently working on the redevelopment of Bow Street Magistrates Court in London and Queensmere and Observatory in Slough.

#### **About Spirit International**

Spirit International launched in 2003 as a real estate advisory company based in the Algarve, Portugal. In 2005 the company launched a property development division. Headquartered in Dublin, Spirit International currently has projects in Budapest (Hungary), Warsaw, Gdynia, Białystok and Elbląg (Poland).

Spirit International Poland is a joint venture company between Spirit International and McCarthy and Associates, a project management company with vast experience in Ireland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland. This new joint venture company has secured in excess of €200 million from private investors in Ireland and the UK which will result in €800 million of capital expenditure on the Polish market. The company plans significant investment over the next three years focusing on retail, commercial, hotel and residential projects