

# Landmark €70 million Johnston Court opens in Sligo

## **First stage of master plan for regeneration of Sligo town centre**

(October 2007) Johnston Court, the major new landmark mixed use development in Sligo town centre opened to the public for the first time today. Designed for Rendl Properties by Douglas Wallace, the leading firm of architects and designers, Johnston Court represents the first stage of the Master Plan for Sligo devised by Sligo Borough Council.

The 150,000 sq ft regeneration development was built on a series of brownfield sites. It includes listed structures that have been sensitively restored and amalgamated into the development by Rendl Properties. The state-of-the-art retail offering is designed to boost local shopping demand and also to attract additional shoppers and tourists into the town centre from other regions, providing an economic lift for Sligo. The €70 million new development also includes high quality residential apartments and office space.

A key feature of the development is a basement specially constructed below the water table which will service the entire regeneration area including existing major retailers adjoining the site. The new fashion mall includes 110,000 sq ft of retail space on two levels. It creates a link from Sligo's main shopping thoroughfare, O'Connell Street, to a new public square.

Douglas Wallace managed all elements of the design and construction process as well as creating the interior architecture concepts. The designs addressed the needs of top name retailers including Tommy Hilfiger, Esprit, Virgin, Pamela Scott, Elvery's, H. Samuel, Peter Mark, Costa Coffee, Best Seller labels and international franchises. There are 28 individual stores, each taking in two storeys in the main shopping mall.

The mall makes widespread use of natural lighting including an elaborately glazed roof. The design also addressed the need to integrate the existing historical O'Connell Street façade into the centre. The development was managed by Douglas Wallace's offices in Galway. The company's other major retail projects have included Scotch Hall in Drogheda, Edward Square in Galway and the Dundrum Town Centre.

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Developer Ray Monahan, commented: “We are confident that Johnston Court will make a major contribution to the Sligo economy as well as adding to the overall amenity of the town centre. It will complement the existing high quality shopping facilities in Sligo by attracting local and visitor shoppers who will also want to visit the wider town centre. We are very pleased to have made this major investment in Sligo. I believe that people will be delighted with the results achieved in this development which has formed an integral part of the Borough Council’s regenerative Master Plan.”

Hugh Wallace, CEO , Douglas Wallace Architects commented: “This has been a challenging and exciting project to work on as it has involved the regeneration of a site within the existing commercial heart of Sligo, the restoration of existing historic buildings and the integration of the development into the wider streetscape, culture and society of Sligo. The design concepts and materials used are all of a very high quality and Johnston Court will be a very welcoming, friendly and open environment to visit.”

Ed Douglas, Director of Johnston Court’s letting agents DNG Commercial, commented: “This is a flagship mixed development which puts Sligo firmly back on the map as the major retail and commercial centre of the north-west. The excellent retailers who we have been able to attract to Johnston Court are testament to its central location and the very high quality of architecture, design and construction that has been undertaken.”

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