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## **FASHION LEADERS FLOCK TO FASHION ISLAND**

Prime Retail, the group behind the central Nelson Fashion Island development, today announced the centre's first tenants. Leading retailers including Staxs, Jacqui E, Diva, Rodd & Gunn, Sunglass Style, Portmans, Dotti, The Body Shop, Barkers, Hartleys and Andrea Biani are confirmed as foundation tenants.

Prime Retail Chief Executive, Mark Schiele believes the fresh retail mix will be welcomed by the greater Nelson community.

"Leasing is proceeding very well and we are pleased with the calibre of this first group of tenants – they represent many of New Zealand's most popular fashion brands. What's more, all of these brands are new to Nelson," he says.

The Fashion Island concept was launched in Papamoa in May 2006, with Fashion Island Nelson being the second such centre developed by Prime Retail. The inspiration for these developments came from the American 'lifestyle centre' concept which has proven extremely popular with shoppers. Typically, these centres are characterised by their open air configuration and select retail offering with an emphasis on apparel, homewares and a variety of quality food outlets. They tend to be carefully designed with plenty of easy parking, landscaping and a 'Main Street' style retail layout so as to be conducive to casual leisure visits.

"The concept has already proven very popular with Bay of Plenty shoppers and we believe the same will be true in Nelson. Nelson will be a particularly attractive development, reflecting the centre's CBD position and benefiting from our careful consideration of the historical architectural context of the location. The fashion offering will also be very broad - basically, if it's fashion you're after, you'll come to Fashion Island," Mr Schiele says.

Resource consent for the original development plan was granted in July last year but Prime Retail decided to revise these plans following a tour of United States' lifestyle centres.

"We realised that many of the most attractive features of the best US lifestyle centres could still be successfully incorporated into our Nelson centre - albeit refined and tailored to the local market – with only a minor delay to the opening date. We sought to offer improved access and traffic flow, and to take full advantage of Nelson's great climate with a greater emphasis on outdoor areas," Mr Schiele says.

The revised development plans, which further enhance the design and ambience of the centre, were approved by Nelson City Council and resource consent was subsequently granted in late February. A key component of the new plan is the retention of the iconic Morrison St Café.

Prime Retail is delighted the enhanced development has been given the green light.

“The council was clearly impressed with our decision to really open up the centre to Morrison Street. The centre will now be built around a central, extensively landscaped outdoor area that can be accessed directly from Morrison Street.

“And, while the centre retains a strong fashion focus, we are now also able to offer a more comprehensive variety of food outlets and lifestyle services such as a gym and beauty therapist,” Mark Schiele says.

Demolition of existing buildings on the central Nelson site is almost complete and construction will start mid March. When the centre opens in October, more than 100 new jobs will be created.

Concept animation and development plans for Fashion Island Nelson can be viewed on [www.fashionisland.co.nz](http://www.fashionisland.co.nz)

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