

Old lady to get a facelift

A 150-year-old lady on Devon St East is getting a Macfarlanes makeover.

Ozone Coffee owner Craig Macfarlane has teamed up with Garageworks co-owner Karyn Grant to refurbish the old State Hotel building on the corner of Devon St East and Gover St.

Ms Grant said once a full internal renovation and an external paint job were finished, the partners hoped to open Joe's Garage New Plymouth by mid-June.

Joe's Garage would be a fully-licensed cafe open seven days a week with about 15 staff, she said.

"It meets everybody's needs and suits all sorts at all times of the day," Ms Grant said.

Mr Macfarlane said they were also looking at the possibility of sprucing up the accommodation quarters on the first floor.

Garageworks also co-own the Joe's Garage franchise operations in Queenstown and Wellington with plans to open another Joe's Garage in Hamilton later this year.

The New Plymouth site will be co-owned and operated by shareholders Ms Grant and her husband Kevin Gibson.

"We think it will add to an already vibrant hospitality scene

in New Plymouth," she said.

Open seven days a week until late, Joe's Garage would provide quality food and espresso in a casual dining environment, Mr Macfarlane said.

Puke Ariki archives show the two-storey timber building started life as the Red House Hotel in 1865.

According to the Heritage Study, the Star Rugby Club originated there and practices were held in the hotel grounds. For many years it was run by the Lile family as the State Hotel.

Lion Breweries carried out major refurbishment work in 1979 and established a Cobb & Co. restaurant on the ground floor.

More recently it has been known as Burton's Bar and Breakers Restaurant.

It was initially built in 1865 by Richard Langman with the first licensee Josiah Carter going bankrupt the same year.

Garageworks Taranaki Ltd initially intended on building a Joe's Garage on the corner of Clemow Rd and Sackville St in Fitzroy.

The owners lodged a resource consent application and liquor licence with the New Plymouth District Council for the site last year but decided to change their plans because it was "commercially sensible", Ms Grant said.



Makeover: The old State Hotel Burton's on the corner of Devon St East and Eliot St is being transformed by the Macfarlanes Group and Garageworks into a Joe's Garage. Over the past week scaffolding has been put up around the building in preparation for a paint job. Photo: ROBERT CHARLES/FAIRFAX NZ