

The Australian  
Edition 1TUE 22 FEB 2000, Page 023  
DJs sale nets \$85m  
By SAMANTHA MAGNUSSON \* Property

UPMARKET retailer David Jones will receive \$85million from the sale of its flagship Adelaide Central Plaza retail development to a consortium of private investors.

The Precision Group of Companies, a syndicate of Melbourne and Adelaide investors -- including businessmen Ross Makris and **Shaun Bonett** and interests associated with Michael Czarny of Meerkin and Arpel lawyers -- will take control of the Rundle Mall project when it is opened in September this year.

"We expect \$85 million will cover the planned development costs and land value," David Jones general manager of property John Bolas said.

The project will be completed in seven months.

The sale of the retail development comes after David Jones was forced to finance the construction itself after failing to secure a pre-sale agreement in 1998.

The Adelaide Central Plaza will comprise a four-level 26,000sqm David Jones department store and more than 40 specialty shops.

The retailer said there had been "very strong" interest in 75 per cent of the shops and several deals had been signed.

"Leasing interest in the 40 specialty shops within the Adelaide Central Plaza remained strong and was expected to result in some additional shopping 'firsts' for the Adelaide CBD," David Jones managing director Peter Wilkinson said.

The sale of the company's property assets is part of a three-year strategy to boost its profits through store closures, renovations and marketing initiatives to attract higher spending customers.

The retailer is continuing to operate at the site under a short-term lease agreement before it moves to nearby Adelaide Central Plaza.

David Jones has sold its Brisbane store and is expected to sell properties in Sydney and Melbourne. Shares in David Jones closed 1c lower at \$1.26 in a weaker market.

**Section:** FINANCE

© Copyright. All rights reserved. Most articles on Newstext are copyright News Limited. Some copyright is owned by third parties. You may read this article on-screen or print it once for your own personal use. You may not make further copies, forward it by email, post it on an internet or intranet site or make any other use of it without written permission from us. These and any copyright licensing queries should be sent to us at [newstext@newsltd.com.au](mailto:newstext@newsltd.com.au)