Quest to build finally pays off

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GETTING a shovel into what was once holy ground marked a significant milestone in a decade-long process for FK Gardner and Sons executive chairman Gary Gardner.

Construction of a 72-room Margaret St apartment building was officially launched yesterday by Mr Gardner, Quest Serviced Apartments general manager of locations Andrew Weisz and Mayor Paul Antonio.

Mr Gardner was pleased at the compromise reached in keeping the heritage aspects of the former Church of Christ building.

“Well, it is a site we have had for probably eight years, going on 10 years, which has obviously cost us a lot of money to keep,” Mr Gardner said.

“Previous councils... had us keeping the whole church and not doing openings and it was quite restrictive what you could do.

“It is very good that council has come on board with their support.”

Mr Weisz said his company had been looking at expanding into Toowoomba for a number of years.

“Quest has a fairly aggressive growth strategy all around Australia,” Mr Weisz said.

“We’ve got a number under construction at the moment in Queensland and this is adding another one to Quest presence in regional Queensland.”

He hoped the apartments would appeal to business travellers on extended stays in Toowoomba.

“That is why we have the apartment format, so you can actually live there.”

The agreement between his company and FK Gardner and Sons was finalised late last year.

“We knew at the start of the year that it was happening, it was just a matter of picking a start date.”

The building is expected to be ready for its first guests in July or August next year.

It is very good that council has come on board with their support.

— Gary Gardner

CHANGING CBD: Breaking ground on the development of a 72-room apartment building are (from left) FK Gardner and Sons executive chairman Gary Gardner, Mayor Paul Antonio and Quest Serviced Apartments general manager of locations Andrew Weisz.

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