

Three big retirement villages in pipeline

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BIG PLANS: From left, Masonic Villages chief executive Warick Dunn, Armstrong Downes Commercial director Tony Doile and Masonic project manager Alan Atack check out the plans as work starts on the Woburn Apartments, Lower Hutt.

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project.

The project would be a boost for the local economy, director Tony Doile said. It was the largest project the company had taken on since the Harvey Norman Centre in 2007.

"Our build programme . . . will see up to 25 different trades involved and most of these will be locally based companies and personnel. On some of our busiest days we expect to have up to 100 people working on site."

Work has started on the Woburn Apartments, a \$35 million retirement village in Lower Hutt that will feature a beauty salon, theatre, gym spa and "men's shed".

Retirement villages worth hundreds of millions of dollars are in the pipeline around the Hutt Valley.

Summerset is working on resource consents for a \$100m facility on a 3.3-hectare slice of land at Boulcott's Farm Heritage Golf Club. Ryman Healthcare is planning a Petone development said to be valued at more than \$100m.

The Woburn Apartments is the first of the three to get under way.

"It's the biggest building project the city has seen in several years," Masonic Villages Ltd chief executive Warick Dunn said.

The project was granted resource consent by the Hutt City Council, with official building contracts signed off today.

Ground preparation work has already begun in the grounds of the Woburn Masonic Village, beside the existing rest home and hospital.

"The apartments will set the benchmark for quality retirement living in the Hutt Valley and are designed for a new generation of residents who expect to lead comfortable active lifestyles in their retirement," Dunn said.

The first stage will be completed by October next year, with 47 apartments.

Residents will have access to two conservatories, a small library, men's shed, bar and lounge overlooking the Hutt River.

The men's shed, a recent innovation, would provide a space for residents to store tools and work on projects.

"They can be very beneficial," Dunn said.

In the second stage, 39 apartments will be completed in 2015, along with hairdressing salon, cafe, snooker room, theatre and gym.

Hutt firm Armstrong Downes has been signed up to complete the

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