

Makeover for a tired old lady

THE 70-year-old Rosebank Hotel in Johannesburg is undergoing a R250m redevelopment that will reposition it to take full advantage of increasing demand for hotel accommodation in the area.

The Rosebank precinct is undergoing major redevelopment with several property owners developing new properties and redeveloping existing ones. The Gautrain rapid rail link, which will have one of its stations in Oxford Road, is seen as a catalyst for rejuvenation.

Hospitality Property Fund, the JSE-listed hotel-focused property fund that owns the four-star Rosebank Hotel, says the 318-room hotel needs a complete makeover.

MD Gerald Nelson says the hotel was closed two weeks ago for redevelopment, which would be finished next April.

The hotel will keep the same number of rooms, but there will be a complete makeover of the property, its rooms, banqueting and conference facilities.

"It is being refurbished from top to bottom," says Nelson. "Despite its age the hotel was still trading exceptionally well, but it's become a bit of a tired old lady. I think the refurbishment was overdue. Given current and future demand in the Rosebank area, we are looking to reposition the hotel to take full advantage of this."

Hospitality, which also owns the Courtyard Hotel in a joint venture with the City Lodge Group, says the Rosebank Hotel will be closed until the refurbishment is completed. The redevelopment will not dilute earnings as the loss of income was factored into the development costs.

Nelson says Gautrain will be "a catalyst for the whole of Rosebank". In critical mass and growth, Rosebank will be second only to Sandton's central business district on completion of the Gautrain project.



The Rosebank Hotel's owners are spending R250m on a revamp.

