

# Office plan for Valhalla

The owners of the Valhalla cinema in Glebe have lodged an application with the City of Sydney to convert the building into offices.

Mike and Prue Williams of W Property bought the heritage-listed site for \$2.95 million in April, after the cinema was forced to close due to financial difficulties last year.

Under W Property's plans the building on Glebe Point Road will be divided into 38 strata-titled offices. The cinema's historic foyer and shops will be restored and retained.

Mr Williams said the shell of the building would remain largely unchanged and the site would continue to be called Valhalla.

W Property hopes to begin construction on the Valhalla in January next year and finish by November.

**Emily O'Keefe**



**Plans for the Valhalla building.**

# Glebe's Valhalla reborn

FOUR years after closing its doors as a cinema, Glebe's legendary Valhalla building is up and running as a creative work space after a conversion by W Property.

Originally known as The Astor, the cinema opened in 1937 with a capacity of 992. Its first screenings were *Easy Living* and *Borneo*.

The Astor operated for 25 years before closing in 1962 and being de-licensed in 1965.

Through the 1970s, the venue was often used for live theatre productions such as *Oh! Calcutta* and *The Rocky Horror Show*, and it was most recently known as an art-house film venue.

The redevelopment was not without controversy, with the National Trust campaigning to preserve the Valhalla because of its historical value, and position in the community as an exhibitor of non-mainstream and foreign language films of quality.

However, the conversion went ahead, and Tanner Architects were engaged to design 38 new work studios within the existing auditorium.



The Valhalla has been transformed into a new creative work space.

Photo: CRAIG WILSON



REVOLVING DOORS

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The existing four shops and main lobby were restored with the maintenance of the building's ambience in mind.

Two new floors have been added within the existing building, incorporating a central corridor with internal voids.

A passenger lift with glass doors is used for access between floors.

The studios have timber floors, glass fronts facing the corridor and independent airconditioning. Some studios have terraces and others a mezzanine. Occupants can use the original lobby and external communal terrace for informal meetings.

New occupant **David Glover** from Vox Populi, a marketing consultancy, has strong ties to the building, having worked there on a production of *The Elocution of Benjamin Franklin* several years ago. "I also knew the building well through the years from seeing films, and I loved it," Mr Glover said. "When I found out it was being developed, coincidentally I needed a change of location, so it was a natural fit."

Mr Glover is particularly pleased



Top, David Glover in the lobby. Above left and right, the renovated interiors of the Valhalla provide a mix of old and new. Photos: CRAIG WILSON

he has a segment of one of the cinema's original walls in his office.

"It's a really good conversion, because there's enough of the original elements here, but the office area is also very functional," he said. "It's also amazing how many clients, suppliers and delivery people know about the building and have heard about it.

"People approach the Valhalla with a real warmth."

The ground floor of the

reconfigured Valhalla has four shops and 13 work studios.

There are 12 work studios on the first floor and 13 on the second.

For more information visit [www.wproperty.com.au](http://www.wproperty.com.au) or call Eric Lundberg of DB Property on 0411 647 510.

W Property has recently completed conversions in Surry Hills, Pyrmont, Redfern, Crows Nest and Chippendale.