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Services masterstroke

A MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR overhaul of the former Masters Home Improvement megastore in Cairns is finally complete with its transformation a massive departure from its old life.

The 27,200 sqm former hardware retail warehouse at the corner of Kenny and Draper streets in Portsmith has sat vacant since the Woolworths-owned chain shut down in 2016.

Speculation was rife about its potential future use as an Ikea or Aldi but the building was ultimately bought by the federal government to shake up the Department of Human Services delivery model.

The building has been gutted and revamped into a Services Australia precinct office housing Medicare and Centrelink, with room for the Department of Veterans' Affairs to make a future shift.

Member for Leichhardt Warren Entsch said that the one-stop shop's completion had been a long time coming.

"After more than 16 months of construction and fit-out works, I'm excited to see the final product open in April," he said.

"The new Cairns Service Centre will be well serviced by public transport, with a bus route that stops directly in front of the Draper Street site.

"There will also be plenty of onsite parking."

Services Minister Stuart Robert said the upgrade was about improving the face-to-face customer experience.

"Staff and services from five different locations across Cairns – including the Aplin Street, Grafton Street and Mulgrave Road service centres

– will co-locate into the new site," he said.

"Bringing these staff and services together in one place will allow for greater collaboration and support between staff, which will in turn mean an improved customer experience for Cairns residents."

The building is next to the Cairns Homemaker Centre.

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