EXPLORE 
Darrell Giles 
POLITICAL EDITOR

THE iconic flour mill and site at Albion on Brisbane's northside will be the focal point of a $39m million village development.

The State Government and developer ZPK will transform the Lhia site into a new community based on the railway station.

Premier Anna Bligh said the Mill Albion project would be the first TransLink Oriented Development, which incorporates housing and offices linked to major transport centres.

A Smart State Council report released in July identified four super precincts-Bowen Hills, Lhia West, South Brisbane and Woodridge-Gilbert-with major redevelopment planned.

The area would be bigger than the CBD and feature major train and bus links.

Albion would be an extension of the Bowen Hills project.

Ms Bligh said Mill Albion would preserve the heritage-listed former Defence Flour Mill and its site in a mix of residential and retail buildings linked by public plazas and spaces. "It will transform what is not a particularly attractive area into a first-class precinct providing a vibrant place where people can live, work and socialise only eight minutes' train ride from the city," she said. "The development preserves a part of Queensland's history while offering a blueprint for the future."

The last piece of the puzzle was sorted out with Brisbane City Council on Friday with an agreement to build a multi-million-dollar footbridge to Mill Albion railway station.

Ms Bligh said Mill Albion would include recycled timber and bricks from the current site. There would be 20,000sq m of office space, 5000sq m of shops and 43 apartments.

There would be two main office buildings, with one as high as 12 levels.

The one, two and three-bedroom units would be in three buildings, including the renovated flour mill, which will feature 11 apartments.

Ground floor retail space would include cafes and restaurants, a major supermarket, medical centre, newsagency, deli, bakery and grocers.

Ms Bligh said southeast Queensland would need 125,000 new dwellings by 2030 to accommodate the expected influx of one million people.

"To step urban sprawl from swallowing our remaining open space, the SEQ Regional Plan proposes that nearly half of the new dwellings be built in established urban areas," she said.

Bomb injures another Digger

Lincoln Wright

AN AUSTRALIAN soldier serving as a bomb disposal expert has been seriously wounded in Afghanistan after a roadside bomb blew him as he tried to defuse it.

The incident follows the recent deaths of Sgt Matthew Locke and Trooper David Preece in Afghanistan.

The wounded soldier, Sgt Michael Lyddiard, is a qualified explosive ordnance disposal operator serving with the Reconstruction Task Force in the south of the country. It is believed he is from Queensland.

Yesterday, Defence spokesman Brigadier Andrew Nikolic said it was likely Sgt Lyddiard would be transferred to a hospital outside Afghanistan.

The incident comes as servicemen and women are leaving the Defence Force because of pressure from their families.

Neil James, executive director of the Australian Defence Association, said about 10 per cent of the military was now serving overseas. "The biggest single cause of people leaving the military is some form of family pressure," he said.

Sgt Lyddiard was part of a team involved in a route-clearance task when the explosion was discovered.

No other soldiers were wounded in the incident, which happened later on Friday evening, Australian time.

Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, said fellow RTF members secured the area and provided medical assistance.

"He was provided with emergency care at the scene and evacuated by helicopter to a nearby surgical facility at Taffin Kowt," he said. "Medical staff describe his current condition of serious but stable."

The Defence spokesman said they would also transfer an immediate family member to be by his side if possible.

Air Marshal Houston said Sgt Lyddiard's family had been notified and Defense was doing everything it could to support them.

"In accordance with the family's wishes we ask that their privacy is respected at this difficult time," he said.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with Sgt Lyddiard, his family and friends."

Extended and dangerous tours of duty are believed to be behind soldiers being urged by their wives to quit the military.

The state is in for a good soaking this week, with a storm forecast for today and rain due on Tuesday carrying through to next weekend.

Forecasters say Queensland can expect similar falls to those now in drought-stricken South Australia.

Bureau of Meteorology forecaster Vikash Prasad said rainfall of 10mm to 30mm a day in the southeast corner was expected.

"The system that is affecting the southern states at the moment is going to push upwards, and that is what we are going to focus on," he said.

The rain is expected as Queensland Water Commission launches an advertising campaign to warn businesses of the Level 5 restrictions to be introduced before the end of the month.

The campaign will run for four weeks.

The proposed restrictions, businesses must meet a target of 25 per cent savings by using a combination of strategies including water use restrictions and special water monitors on certain equipment. Companies also will face court fines of up to $124,875 for not following the rules.

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SHARK alerts shut beaches

SHARK sightings closed beaches yesterday, and on others lifesavers were kept busy with dozens of rescues.

Rainbow Beach, 80km north of Noosa and North Point on the Gold Coast were closed for a short time after sightings.

The sightings capped a busy day for Queensland's lifesavers who rescued a man damaged in the surf at Sunshine Beach.

The man was taken to hospital with suspicion of shark bite.

Eighteen people were rescued by lifesavers on the Gold Coast, where the surf swelled to 1.5m. Ten were plucked from the water at Burleigh after being caught in a large rip about midday.

Man escapes house blaze

A MAN and his dog were lucky to escape unscared from a fire which partly destroyed his family home in Brisbane yesterday.

The man, 22, woke just before 10am to the smell of smoke and discovered that an upstairs room of the Chermside home was ablaze.

When his parents arrived at the Chermside St home, his mother collapsed and was treated by paramedics.

His father was comforted by neighbours.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service said it appeared the fire started in an upstairs bedroom and at this stage was not being treated as suspicious.