

🕒 December 15, 2015 16:47pm

(<http://insidesouthaustralia.com.au/nola-boys-putting-all-on-the-line-to-take-craft-beer-to-the-east-end/>)

By David Russell

When Adelaide engineer Matt Orman rocked up at property tycoon Steve Maras' front door with a beer in one hand and a vinyl record in the other, he knew his pitch would have to be good.

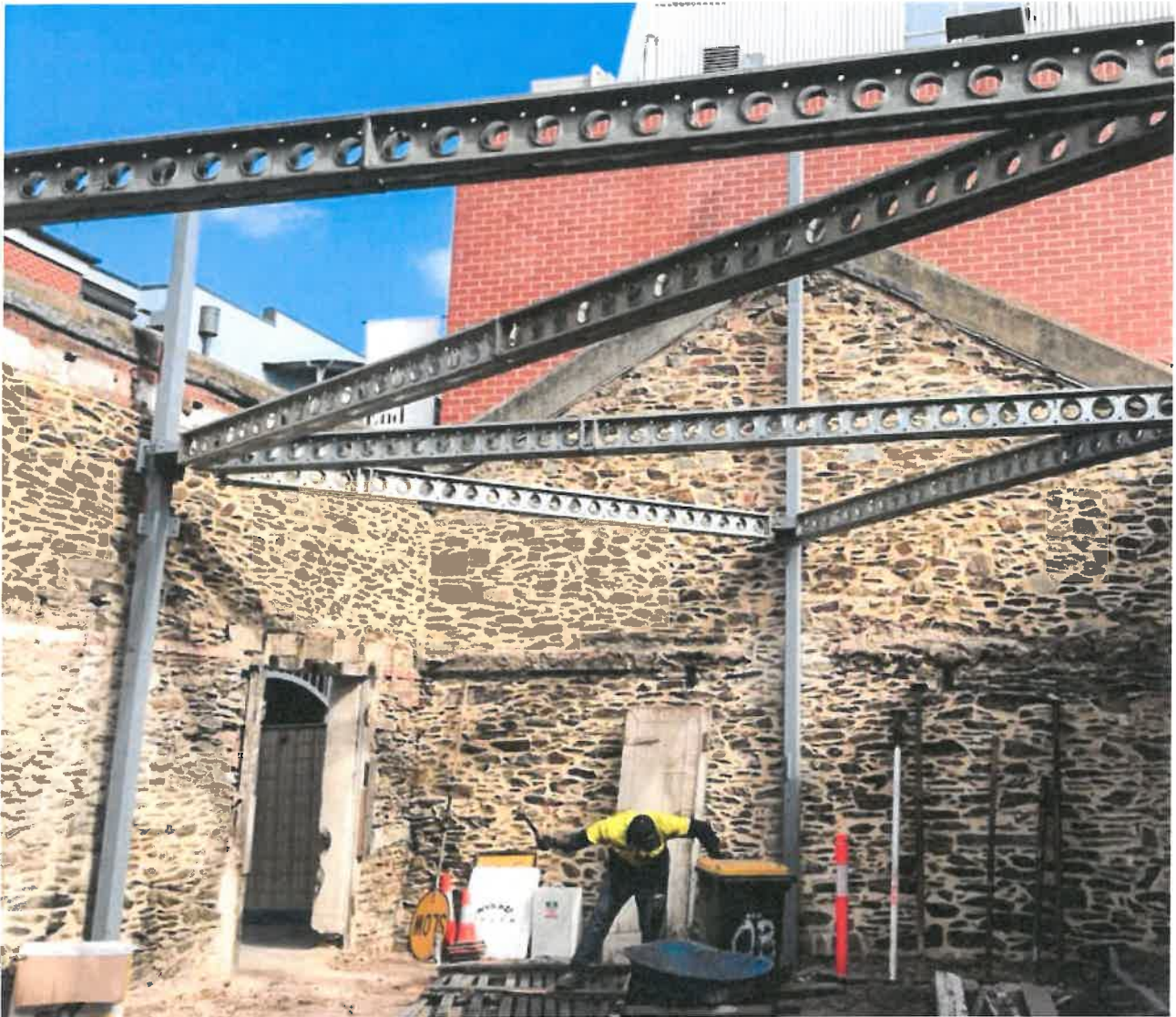
He and fellow beer-lovers Alex Marshall, Josh Talbot and Oliver Brown had a grand plan; to open a completely unique bar named NOLA that would serve quirky, experimental beers and whisky in a New Orleans-style setting. They had unbounded passion and broad skill sets, but were short one thing – a venue.

"We looked at the West End and realised it's getting saturated," Matt told *Inside South Australia*.

"It's really hard to come in there as a new entity and have some individuality... so we started looking farther afield... we'd seen The Stables (on Vardon Avenue) and wondered who owned them and how much it would cost to develop the site... so we went on a fact-finding mission.

"(That) lead us to Steve Maras... we told him there's only one place in Adelaide where we can pull this off, and that's The Stables. It was the only place that had the heritage and the opportunity to develop."

Steve liked what he heard, and with Matt, Alex and Josh maintaining their engineering jobs and Oliver working full-time on NOLA (<http://www.nolaadelaide.com/>), they worked well into the night, every night, navigating licensing and other paperwork for nine months. That was followed by a "hell-raising" fit out.



(<http://insidesouthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Blog770px-NOLA6.jpg>)

"All of a sudden we had a year's worth of work to do in two months... you've got to work through a lot of things before you can get to the part where you can enjoy it," said Matt.

"Passion was the only thing that keep us going... we're all double-working at the moment and you don't do that for anything other than passion, that's the only way you can work those long hours.

"We wanted to have our cake and eat it too – to make our day jobs our passion. There aren't too many people that can say that, and it's what we wanted to do."

Between them Matt, Alex, Josh and Oliver have invested their life-savings into NOLA.



(<http://insidesouthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Blog770px-Screen-Shot-2015-12-15-at-4.47.33-pm.jpg>)

"We've put everything on the line for this... we just hope that it's stable over time... we know we aren't going to make squillions, its more about being something to put our love into."

NOLA, which opened to the public Thursday, is a beer-lovers bar. Alex and Josh are avid home-brewers, and Oliver is the former owner of East End bar Red Trousers. There aren't too many staples among the 16 beers on tap, it's all about small, craft breweries – many of them South Australian – and experimentation.

"Local breweries like Prancing Pony and Big Shed... they don't really get the opportunity, other than in their brew pub, to put their one-off kegs into a bar.



(<http://insidesouthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Blog770px-NOLA3.jpg>)

"When they get the call up from a bar to put a keg on, they have to put on their flagship beer that everyone will like... so they can't experiment and test the customer base.... they don't get a chance to expand their brand and their product line.

"Instead of taking their mainstays, we want to take their one-offs and their experimental beers, and if people are loving it, we'll be asking for more.

"We will include a high percentage of South Australian breweries so they can release a test batch and get feedback at minimum risk.

"We want a community to come in around us... (to be) a place where beer-lovers can reliably come to try new beer."

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stretched (to the East End) yet

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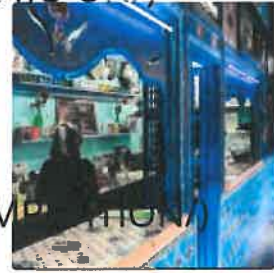
"We want the East End to thrive.... there is a lot of potential here for growth and regeneration and to compete with the West End. It can be a destination spot rather than something you go to your passing by... (or) during the Fringe."

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