

News

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Groundbreaking ceremony marks beginning of new era for Doncaster

Muse Developments and Doncaster Council today kicked off the construction of the town's new Civic and Cultural Quarter at a special 'groundbreaking' ceremony.

Peter Davies, mayor of Doncaster, was behind the wheel of a JCB marking the start of building work by lifting the first bucket of soil from the site of the new civic offices.

Guests included Michael Broadhead, projects director for the council's development partner Muse Developments, Councillor Jonathan Wood, cabinet member for business and regeneration, and David Price business unit manager at Wates Construction, contractors for the new civic offices.

Peter Davies said: "This is a historic moment for a town with a long and distinguished history. Today is the start of a new chapter for Doncaster.

"With cuts being forced on the council by the government, the timing of a scheme that promises a new council headquarters is not ideal. However we are where we are and must now get behind this project which has the potential to be a catalyst for stimulating growth in our economy. The intention is to create a destination that complements our quality shopping and market areas and encourages more visitors and business to Doncaster.

"I wish the project well and I look forward to something really special."

The civic offices have been designed to be highly sustainable, providing low running costs and reducing carbon emissions. A BREEAM Excellent rating is anticipated.

For Muse Developments, Michael Broadhead said: "The sustainable low carbon features of the scheme will save the Council a great deal in running costs and will reduce carbon emissions by up to 32% on current building regulations. The new Civic Quarter will really set the standard for further new buildings in the town and the region."

Councillor Jonathan Wood said: "The new development recognises the need to regenerate the Waterdale area. The scheme will boost the local economy, improve Doncaster's image and help to put the town in the forefront of investor's minds when they are looking for a place on the up."

The civic offices will become the council's new town centre headquarters and include a council chamber and one-stop shop for customer services. The one-stop shop will bring the council's customer facing services under one roof. Construction is expected to finish in September 2012.

A 'meet the buyer' event will take place in the New Year to give local businesses and suppliers the opportunity to meet Wates Construction and bid for work.

Work on the other first phase elements including the performance venue, civic square, housing and a refurbished southern multi-storey car park will get under way in 2011. Phase one should be complete and fully open by summer 2013.

The project is supported financially by both Central Government and the European Union as part of the European Regional Development Fund's support for the region's economic development

through the Yorkshire and Humber ERDF Programme.

Ends.