

News

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1.4m sq ft Birkenhead transformation moves a step closer as planning is submitted

Following a major consultation exercise earlier in the year, which formed the basis of a new masterplan, the Wirral Growth Company team has submitted its ambitious plans for the transformation of Birkenhead town centre to Wirral Council's planning department.

The new masterplan for the town centre includes the delivery of a new central business district with high-quality office space, alongside leisure space with a new market hall, the creation of vibrant town-centre living, as well as extensive public realm and green space.

The central business district is key to unlocking the wider regeneration of Birkenhead town centre which Wirral Council is progressing through national programmes such as the £25m Town Deal Fund.

Wirral Growth Company (WGC) was formed in 2019, creating a 50:50 joint venture between Wirral Council and national urban regenerator, Muse Developments, to deliver a long-term vision for regeneration, which aims to improve the homes, lives and communities for key areas across the borough.

Mike Horner, development director at Muse Developments, said: "It's a proud moment for all associated with the growth company as we reach this significant milestone, which is the culmination of months of hard work from the team to get this over the line ready for submission.

"We thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the community to give them the opportunity to inform plans for the future of the town. We've taken their thoughts into consideration, which I hope they can see in the final masterplan. We're committed to working with the council and all stakeholders as we bring forward a new vibrant vision for Birkenhead that will repurpose and reimagine the heart of the town centre, driving economic growth and social prosperity at a time when it's needed most."

"This is a pivotal time for Wirral," said Wirral Council cabinet member for regeneration and growth, councillor Tony Jones. "At Wirral Council, we have long-harboured ambitions to see the borough fulfil its real potential as a desirable destination for businesses to locate, families to live and visitors to discover our breath-taking coastline, our heritage and our thriving arts culture.

"The submission of this planning application provides a significant marker that we are moving forward in realising our aspirations for Birkenhead, which will secure jobs and will improve the quality of life for our communities."

AHR Architects are masterplanners for the project, with Barton Willmore acting as planning consultants on behalf of the growth company.

Greg Dickson, director at Barton Willmore, said: "Wirral Growth Company is playing a key role in the delivery of regeneration across the Wirral and we're delighted to have played our part in the preparation of this major planning submission, which presents a unique opportunity to redefine the heart of the town centre.

"The hybrid planning application for the Birkenhead masterplan has been informed over the past

18 months by a proactive two-stage consultation process that gave the team the opportunity to meet many people from the local community. These proposals have taken into account the wide-ranging feedback that has been received and has distilled them into a deliverable masterplan, which aims to set a new benchmark in design quality.”

Should the planning submission receive consent, the first phase of development will bring forward two office buildings totalling 190,000 sq ft, which are anticipated to be on site in mid 2021.