

# News

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## **The Arc Cinema signs up at Rotherham's Forge Island**

The Arc Cinema has exchanged a long-term lease with national urban regenerator, Muse Developments, to become the leisure anchor at Rotherham's Forge Island, which will see a key area in the heart of the town centre repurposed into a vibrant mixed-use destination.

The boutique cinema operator currently has six sites across the UK and Ireland, with a further two UK sites under construction and due to open in mid-2021. It specialises in providing a VIP cinema experience for the price of a standard ticket.

Along with the cinema at Forge Island, plans include a new hotel, food and drink outlets and a car park. The new leisure facilities will be set within an attractive public square with a new pedestrian bridge connecting the scheme to the wider town centre, to create a real sense of place.

Brian Gilligan, director at Melcorpo, which runs The Arc Cinema, said: "We were delighted to be selected by Rotherham Council and Muse to bring one of our state-of-the-art cinemas to the Forge Island site. We would like to express our grateful thanks to them for their support in helping make this possible.

"The large high-specification eight-screen cinema has been specially designed to ensure we become a leisure hub, enabling us to provide a focal point for the people of Rotherham. Our customers love the fact that we offer a luxurious VIP experience, but we only charge standard cinema prices, and we think that unique combination is perfectly suited to Rotherham.

"Everyone is really looking forward to treats like cinema and restaurant trips again so we're particularly excited to have the opportunity to be part of this good news story for the Rotherham community at this time."

Dan Needham, development director at Muse Developments, said: "Agreeing a deal with such a respected operator as The Arc Cinema is a ringing endorsement of the innovative plans we're looking to deliver at Forge Island.

"Working collaboratively with the council and partners, we're working hard to develop a game-changing scheme that will bring a real vibrancy not seen before, that will drive inward investment and growth to the local economy, while providing opportunities and prosperity at a time that it's needed most. Forge Island represents what can be achieved when the best of the public and private sector come together with the same vision, drive and goal in mind."

Rotherham Council's cabinet member for jobs and the local economy, Cllr Denise Lelliott, said: "This is a significant milestone in Rotherham's development which we are excited to announce. We can't wait to see a brand new, state of the art, eight-screen cinema on Forge Island - bringing blockbuster movies back to the town centre for the first time in over 30 years.

"We are delighted to have secured Arc Cinema because of its approach to delivering high-quality screenings tailored to local communities. The Arc Cinema will be an asset to Rotherham and I'm really pleased the operator has selected the town as one of its locations to continue its rollout of cinemas across the UK and Yorkshire.

Our development also presents an exciting opportunity for restaurants, bars and cafes looking to

be part of what will be one of the most attractive town centre leisure destinations in the region.” Following the deal with The Arc Cinema, and discussions advancing with a major hotel operator, it is anticipated that construction will begin in autumn 2021.