

News

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Arden Cross Selects Muse as development partner

Arden Cross Limited, the consortium behind the £3.2 billion, mixed-use commercial and residential destination at the heart of the Midlands, has agreed a landmark development deal with national developer, Muse.

The agreement will see the 140 Ha (346-acre) Arden Cross regeneration move forward with one of the UK's leading names in mixed-use development, who has the appetite, as well as a proven, 37-year track record of delivering complex places in partnership that bring positive, generational benefits to communities.

Arden Cross Limited is a special purpose delivery vehicle created by landowners Birmingham City Council, Packington Estate and Coleshill Estate to drive forward the potential of the site where the new HS2 Interchange station is already under construction and will provide fast connections across the country, including direct links to central London in just 38 minutes. The Arden Cross masterplan builds upon this exceptional connectivity at the very heart of the country, with its co-location alongside the NEC campus, Birmingham Airport and Birmingham International station.

Muse makes the perfect partner for pushing ahead with plans to create 3,000 new homes, up to 6 million sq ft of employment space and up to 27,000 new jobs. The first phase of development could come forward as early as 2025 and could see a range of facilities and employment opportunities created.

The link up with Muse comes swiftly after Arden Cross Limited recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB) and with the University of Warwick to explore opportunities for bringing forward a new Medical & Technology Campus to deliver world-beating innovation in the healthcare and technology sectors.

Wider partners in the development which forms part of the UK Central Hub also include HS2, Department for Transport, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and the Urban Growth Company who are working together to deliver a range of shared priorities.

Ben Gray, project director with Arden Cross Ltd, said: 'Arden Cross is focused on delivering sustainable growth for the region and the whole of the UK and we know Muse will help us achieve this. We're committed to working together to capitalise on the masterplan principles and deliver transformational change for the region while creating a world leading economic hub for the UK in a unique public-private partnership that leverages the superb connectivity of Arden Cross.'

Maggie Grogan, development director for Muse, said: 'This is a truly unique opportunity to bring forward a landmark destination for the UK that's a beacon for growth in the Midlands and we're immensely proud to be joining the team. As a business, we're committed to delivering sustainable regeneration at pace, while at the same time bringing real, tangible benefits to communities and we can't wait to get started.'

Cllr Ian Courts, leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, said: 'This is another vote of confidence in Solihull and the region and our shared commitment to net zero carbon by 2030. A green, accessible and thriving new destination for the UK, Arden Cross has the potential to really add to our regional and national economy and the news that an experienced organisation like Muse

is on board will fuel our ability to reach our objectives.’

Cllr Ian Ward, leader of Birmingham City Council, landowners at Arden Cross said: ‘Muse is a highly respected partner in large scale urban regeneration up and down the country and their experience will be put to good use here in the Midlands. As a landowning partner at Arden Cross, Birmingham City Council is committed to bringing forward the site masterplan as quickly and as effectively as possible and Muse will help us achieve this for the good of everyone in the region.’

Andy Street, mayor of the West Midlands, said: “With more than £800 million of investment already committed to the Arden Cross site, there is a huge amount of national and indeed international interest in the tremendous potential of the site to serve a multiplicity of uses. This announcement with a partner of the calibre of Muse reinforces that interest and maintains the momentum around this landmark public private partnership. I’m confident that Arden Cross can and will be a real exemplar of the Levelling Up agenda – boosting the regional and national economy and changing lives locally for the better in the months and years ahead.”

International real estate advisor JLL led the marketing process to attract the new development partner which generated serious interest from many well-known market leading organisations from the UK and beyond. After a 12 month plus procurement process Muse was selected as the partner of choice as it demonstrated a clear understanding of the principles of sustainability and connectivity at the heart of the scheme and is an experienced, empathetic and creative partner with strong placemaking credentials to build upon the investment to date and maximise the masterplan aspirations to create an exceptional new UK destination.

Centrally located and globally connected, Arden Cross is on its way to becoming a major global destination providing a world class environment for working, living, learning and leisure.