

News

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Breaking ground at Royal College of Physicians' new £35 million northern headquarters

Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure has begun work on The Spine - the Royal College of Physicians' new £35 million northern headquarters in Liverpool - with a ceremony to mark the breaking of the ground upon which it will be built.

The 160,000 sq ft building, in Knowledge Quarter Liverpool (KQ Liverpool) - the city's biggest Mayoral Development Zone - will be one of the healthiest workspaces for mental and physical wellbeing in the UK and it is hoped that it will be among the first to achieve the international WELL standard of modern building design when it opens its doors in 2020.

The Spine takes its name from a striking staircase on its north elevation that resembles human vertebrae.

While the bottom three and top four storeys of The Spine will become a new 70,000 sq ft centre of clinical excellence for the RCP, the remaining seven floors will offer a flexible range of innovative, contemporary workspaces designed to meet the needs of organisations in the health, science and education sectors.

Located within Liverpool City Council's £1 billion Paddington Village development, The Spine will boast an internal sky garden, complete with high-oxygen producing plants, a fine dining restaurant available for private hire, a large bicycle and shower facility and undercroft car parking for 50 spaces featuring five electric charging points.

A dedicated mezzanine exhibition space will connect via a spiral staircase to a ground floor café and foyer, while each of the floors, which are circa 11,550 sq ft, will enjoy some of the best views of the city thanks to floor-to-ceiling glazing throughout.

The project is part of Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure's appointment by Liverpool City Council to deliver two projects at the Paddington Village scheme. The company has instigated the planning process and consultant appointments for the building and last year competitively appointed AHR Architects and Arup to design the building and advise on how to achieve the prestigious WELL standard.

GVA and CBRE have been appointed as joint agents on the Paddington Village scheme and a new marketing brochure has been produced to launch at MIPIM UK, the property conference in London, later this week.

Professor Jane Dacre performed the groundbreaking ceremony, with the Mayor of Liverpool, in one of her last official duties before handing over the presidency of the RCP to Professor Bod Goddard.

Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure's managing director for Construction in the North, Barry Roberts, said: "It is great to be on site at what will be an innovative and ambitious building within the Paddington Village scheme.

"The council's ongoing efforts to drive the Liverpool city region's economy forward by focusing on knowledge-intensive jobs in science, education, healthcare and technology industries has the potential to redefine Liverpool's economy, something Morgan Sindall Construction & Infrastructure

is proud to be a part of.”

Professor Goddard said: “I am lucky to have become president at a time when the Royal College of Physicians has both been celebrating its 500th anniversary and is also about to open a brand new chapter in its history with an amazing building that will embody our commitment to wellbeing as we bring high quality research, medical training, examination and conference facilities to Liverpool and work more closely with our regional members.

“This is a physical statement that we have come a long way from our origins as a college and are now very much an organisation for the 21st century and our members and fellows throughout the UK and the world.”

Mayor of Liverpool Joe Anderson said: “I’m delighted that work has now begun on the new northern HQ for the Royal College of Physicians - it’s a landmark moment for them and the city of Liverpool. The Spine is going to be an outstanding building and a real statement of our intent to deliver a world class medical research hub at Paddington Village. Its opening will be a historic occasion and one of many which will cement the flourishing reputation of the city’s knowledge sector and its role as a major economic engine in the North of England.”

Colin Sinclair, CEO of KQ Liverpool, added: “Attracting the RCP to The Spine at Paddington Village is the perfect example of how we can successfully collaborate across Liverpool to support private and public initiatives in health, tech and science. We are unbelievably proud to welcome the RCP to the City Region, as they join us in creating a world-leading Innovation District here in KQ Liverpool.”

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