

New Council Offices Colwyn Bay

NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 1 – FEBRUARY 2017

Welcome to the first project newsletter for the construction of the new offices in Colwyn Bay. The project is a key part of the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy, which commenced in 2013 to streamline the number of its offices. Due for completion in late 2018, the 100,000sqft office building will provide a four storey modern building in the centre of town, which will enable the Council to modernise and streamline its functions. The iconic building and the several hundred staff occupying it will also provide key regeneration benefits to one of North Wales' largest towns.

The aim of this newsletter is to provide an update of the project to keep the public and businesses up to date with what's happening. 2016 was a very busy year for the project, and work started on site in late 2016 when Muse Developments' lead contractors Bowmer & Kirkland, arrived on site in early November. Muse is the Council's development partner for the project. 2017 will also be a busy year for the project and we look forward to sharing key news and events with you.

Wes Erlam, Development Director at Muse commented "Last year there was a lot of work behind-the-scenes to get this important project ready for the next phase, including achieving planning approval and securing funding. This year, passers-by are going to see a lot of activity on site - demolition is already underway, with construction due to commence in Spring. We're looking forward to getting the local community involved and seeing the new building taking shape."

GOING, GOING, GONE



Mid 2016 - Prior to commencement



December 2016 - During demolition



January 2017 - Demolition completed

SITE NEWS

The demolition process started in mid-November 2016 with the property's interior stripped and asbestos removed, followed by the demolition of the main fabric of the building. The work was carried out for Bowmer & Kirkland by Anthony O'Connor & Sons Ltd, with much of the material being re-used on site or removed for recycling.

Bowmer & Kirkland's Project Manager, Mark Hooson said "After the long period of preparation, it's good to actually get the work on site underway. Since we started, there has been a good level of interaction with local residents and many passers-by have been stopping to watch through the perimeter fencing as the large machines and excavators demolish the existing building. Although at the moment there appears to be large piles of concrete demolition material building up, this will all be crushed and used on site as part of the foundations. We understand the potential nuisance these kind of works can cause and will endeavour to keep any disruption to a minimum."



Jennings working on site

Local civil engineering and building contractors, Jennings, based in Llysfaen moved on site mid-December 2016 to start on the ground works, prepare the site for the sheet piling, and to carry out highway works in and around the development site for Bowmer & Kirkland.

"To have a local firm, employing 40 staff on site at its peak, working in their local town, for the Local Authority can only be good for the local economy." said Bleddyn Evans, the Council's Project Manager for the new offices. The benefits that the project can give to the local economy was an important factor in the procurement process.



Malcolm Robertson; Bleddyn Evans and Danny Jones

Danny Jones, Director for Jennings stated "As a local company, we are really pleased to be involved with a significant contract within our home town. We've been aware of the project for some time and attended the Meet the Buyer events at Parc Eirias last year. We've already taken on a two local apprentices, and looking to increase these during the duration of our works. We'll be using local labour, local suppliers, and taking on local apprentices. This is really important to us."

One way traffic has been introduced along Coed Pella Road, Lansdowne Road and Queens Drive to help safely contain the perimeter hoardings, works vehicles and site facilities.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

One of the early wins for the project in relation to the Social Value Plan was the appointment of Becky Uttley as Bowmer & Kirkland's, Corporate Social Responsibility Monitoring Officer.



Aled Roberts and Becky Uttley of B&K

Becky visited a Jobs Fair at Venue Cymru, Llandudno, in April 2016, and gave a copy of her CV to B&K who were exhibiting at the event. "I've enjoyed my first few months working with the dedicated B&K team and on a project which has so many benefits to the local and regional economy. The opportunity purely came along by attending that Jobs fair, however whilst working on a building site is a complete change for me, I

have worked within the social sector locally for many years and am very much looking forward to this new challenge."

Malcolm Robertson, B&K's Contracts Manager added "Following in depth reviews with Conwy County Borough Council, we understood the importance of engaging with the community and utilising local labour wherever possible to help maximise benefits for the local economy. We were therefore delighted to be able to offer this opportunity to a local individual and look forward to working with Becky to deliver the important commitments made as part of the new council office scheme."

SOCIAL VALUE PLAN UPDATE

Engaging with the local business community is an important objective of the project, and a number of local firms have been involved with the project since Bowmer & Kirkland moved on site in November. JB Monitor and North Wales Tree Services, both of whom are based within the County of Conwy, were involved in stripping the site. Building materials have been sourced from Huws Gray, Mochdre. Staff working on the development site are encouraged to buy their lunch and snacks in Colwyn Bay Town centre, and up to the end of January, an estimated £1,200 had been spent by those working on site in local shops. These are early wins for the local economy and a great opportunity for local traders to capitalise on the added footfall this project presents.

In addition to the benefits to local businesses, the Council is keen to get the voluntary sector involved. TAPE Community Music and Film has been commissioned by Muse to set up time-lapse photography for the site. Based in Old Colwyn, TAPE will have cameras positioned in and around the development site to capture the whole process from start to finish and then, with the

help of local young people, prepare short films during the two year build process. Neil Dunsire Director of Operations at TAPE said: "This is a great example of how a commercial project such as this can provide opportunities for people in the creative industries to learn transferable skills that they can take forward into other projects and potentially employment, in this case linear editing and IT skills".

The Project Team are working with the Prince's Trust on the 'Get into Construction' scheme, where some 15 young recruits, aged between 18 and 25 who are not in employment, education or training, will be given an opportunity, following a selection process to undertake a three week programme to learn ground work skills, starting in June 2017. A recruitment process is on-going and those with interest are invited to contact the Project via email at OAS@conwy.gov.uk.



Construction Work on Site

THE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

Whilst work on site has only been visible over the last few months, the Council's Strategy started back in January 2013, and since then, in an effort to streamline its estate, the Council has been disposing of offices to make savings. Having started with twenty five offices back in 2013, the aim by 2018 is to have reduced this to three main offices, and two hubs. By consolidating the stock, it will help the Council to modernise the way it works, and be more accessible to the people of Conwy.



94 Conway Road Colwyn Bay

Over the last few years the Council has disposed of a number of offices, including two close to the new development site, which have generated savings and community benefits. Cartrefi Conwy acquired 94 Conway Road in late 2015 as part of the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places for conversion into six affordable units, which were made available for rent to local people. Another property, in the centre of Colwyn Bay was acquired by Pennaf in 2016 for conversion into specialist accommodation.

"It's a win-win for everyone involved. The Council is able to reduce its running costs and avoid future backlog maintenance on these old properties. Our Registered Social Landlord partners are able to give these properties a new lease of life to tackle the demand for accommodation, and quality homes become available within the local community." commented Bleddyn Evans.

MEET THE BUYER DAY

Bowmer & Kirkland will be holding a further Meet the Buyer day in Summer / Autumn 2017, where local companies will be able to find out more about the different finishing sub contract work packages required to complete the project. For more information about the event, please email OAS@conwy.gov.uk or s.martin@bandk.co.uk