

Kier appointed main contractor of phase 2 of £107m digital campus in Gloucester

3 years ago



Kier has been appointed main contractor by Gloucester City Council and Reef Group to deliver phase 2 of a new £107m technology campus, The Forum.

Situated in the heart of the city centre, The Forum will provide state-of-the-art amenities for emerging and established digital and cyber tech security businesses, including 135,000 sq ft of grade A workspace, conference facilities, a 4-star hotel, rooftop restaurant and bar, cafes and a wellness centre. The scheme will be rated BREEAM Excellent and will use air-sourced heat pumps and a 'blue' roof for water attenuation.

Kier will start on site in spring 2022, with the scheme supporting the council's ambitions to regenerate the city centre, with £5 million of funding for the project from the [Government's levelling-up fund](#).

Throughout the construction of this new digital office space, Kier will work with its local supply chain partners to deliver the project.

As part of its commitment to delivering lasting legacies in areas in which it works, Kier will be providing employment and training opportunities to local residents through a unique learning hub, which will combine in-person and virtual training. The hub will use the construction of The Forum as a 'real life' case study to showcase a range of careers and inspire and train people to be work-ready through a number of workshops that also cover life skills. It will also provide an introduction to opportunities within the supply chain through work experience. The learning hub will be constructed this year and will remain as a teaching space after the project has completed.

The project will also support local social enterprises and local SME businesses using the well-established relationships that have developed from working with Gloucester City Council on previous projects.

Andy Bolas, regional director for Kier Construction Western & Wales, said: “Working with Gloucester City Council and Reef Group, we look forward to delivering this flagship digital centre which is set to be a beacon for technology and cyber tech security businesses in the south west.

“Over 85% of the project team are based in Gloucestershire which means we will utilise our local knowledge, skills and supply chain partners to complete this project. The learning hub is also a unique and enduring legacy which aims to provide sustainable job and training opportunities for the Gloucester community.”

Esther Croft, Development Director at Reef Group, said: “Kier’s commitment to sustainability, learning and employment opportunities and its long-standing connection to Gloucestershire made it the ideal contractor to deliver The Forum.

“Very importantly for us, Kier is determined to support the local community to access all these new training and employment opportunities that will be generated by the build programme. The new learning hub will help ensure that local people can benefit directly from The Forum in the immediate future, as well as the digital campus acting to attract talent from across the UK in the years to come.”

Councillor Richard Cook, leader of Gloucester City Council, said: “The appointment of Kier represents a significant milestone in bringing forward The Forum, and making a reality of our vision of Gloucester as a hub for the digital and cyber sectors. As well as attracting new investment into the city, The Forum will be an inspiring and attractive place for residents and visitors, completely transforming what was formerly a tired part of the city.”

This is the latest win for Kier’s Construction business in the South West, with other awards including a [£30m net zero expansion of Winterstoke Hundred Academy](#) and the [£87m transformation of Musgrove Park hospital](#).

Image credit: Kier