

## Land deal paves way for cutting edge government hub in Manchester

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Plans for a state-of-the-art government digital campus in Manchester took a step closer to fruition following a significant land deal.

The Government Property Agency (GPA) has exchanged contracts to acquire five acres of the former Central Retail Park in Ancoats, from Manchester City Council (MCC).

This is an important step in advancing the GPA's plans to build Manchester Digital Campus, a new Government office complex in the city, bringing together a number of Civil Service departments with a focus around digital skills.

Once complete, the digital hub will be home for around 7,000 civil servants.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, Alex Burghart, said: "This latest expansion in Manchester not only represents our ongoing commitment to investing in digital excellence, but also signifies our dedication to contributing positively to the city's vibrant community and economy.

"We are excited to create more modern and productive work environments in the heart of the city, where civil servants from across the North West can be inspired and take pride in delivering the best possible service to the taxpayer."

The deal, which is conditional on planning, builds on the work MCC and the GPA undertook last year in putting in place an updated Strategic Regeneration Framework, and the shared ambition to regenerate the former retail site, creating employment and wider business opportunities, supported by the digital campus.

Cllr Bev Craig, Leader of Manchester City Council, said: "The new digital campus, set to be home to 7,000

digital jobs, represents a significant investment that will complement the wider regeneration story that has been unfolding in this part of our city centre for the past two decades. We have worked closely with the GPA to unlock the potential of the former retail site through this development, which will sit aside a new public green space delivered by the council – improving access to the existing Cotton Field Park.”

Clive Anderson, Director of Capital Projects at the GPA, said: “We are pleased to be working collaboratively with MCC to regenerate this important area of Manchester, as well as supporting the Government policies of levelling up and places for growth. The GPA is also proud to be creating fantastic and sustainable workplaces to support the transformation of the Civil Service, and we are committed to growing its presence in Manchester, drawing upon the city’s pool of talent.”

The land purchase is expected to complete fully next year, with construction set to begin in 2026.