

From Foundations to Futures: Central Docks Groundbreaking Marks Major Milestone in Liverpool Waters Regeneration

3 months ago



Peel Waters, in partnership with Homes England and Liverpool City Council, proudly marked the official groundbreaking of Central Docks, Liverpool Waters – a pivotal phase in the transformational Liverpool's northern industrial docklands.

The event, titled “From Foundations to Futures”, celebrated the beginning of the £71million vital infrastructure works that will pave the way for a vibrant new waterfront community.

Held on-site at Central Docks, Liverpool Waters, the ceremony brought together civic leaders, project partners, and over 60 students from the newly opened City of Liverpool College Construction Academy, located within the Central Docks development zone. Their presence underscored the project's commitment to nurturing future talent within the City Region and creating employment opportunities and pathways into the construction and regeneration industries.

The 26-acre Central Docks neighbourhood is the largest of five neighbourhoods within the emerging wider Liverpool Waters district. Central Docks will include approximately 2,350 new homes including a mix of affordable, elderly, build-to-rent and open market, supporting the Government's plans to build 1.5 million new homes across the UK in the next four years.

The focal point of the new neighbourhood will be Central Park. The impressive 5-acre park will become one

of the inner city's largest green spaces, with hundreds of new trees, new play areas, sports and recreational facilities as well as providing new walking and cycling routes for residents, visitors and workers in the area.

Peel Waters, the master-planner and developer behind Liverpool Waters, is working closely with Homes England and Liverpool City Council to ensure the project delivers long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits for the city and its communities.

Last month, Peel Waters appointed GRAHAM, a leading contractor with a strong track record in complex urban developments to deliver the infrastructure works and the construction of Central Park. The essential infrastructure includes underground utilities, roads, and public realm that will be fundamental to delivering the ambitious number of homes within the new neighbourhood and enable the future commercial and public realm spaces to flourish.

The £71 million contract awarded to GRAHAM represents the largest portion of the £81.1 million total project cost. This investment will be underpinned by £25.9 million direct investment from Peel Waters, alongside a substantial £55.2 million contribution from Homes England. Liverpool City Council's Cabinet agreed to accept the £55.2m Brownfield Infrastructure Land grant funding from Homes England and will act as the accountable body on behalf of Peel Waters.

James Whittaker, Managing Director of Peel Waters, said: "The groundbreaking of Central Docks marks a pivotal moment not just for Liverpool Waters, but for the future of this iconic waterfront. This milestone is the result of years of collaboration with our partners across the public and private sectors, and it reflects our shared commitment to unlocking the full potential of these historic docklands."

"From the foundations we lay today, we're building futures – for residents, businesses, and the next generation of skilled workers, driving forward regeneration on a scale that will benefit generations to come."

Stephen Hill, Managing Director, GRAHAM Civil Engineering, said: "We're delighted to be appointed as principal contractor on this landmark scheme for Peel Waters, reflecting our shared commitment to creating infrastructure and neighbourhoods that prioritise sustainability and community. This project will play a pivotal role in further regeneration of the docklands area, and we look forward to working with Peel Waters to transform this site into an iconic waterfront."

Amy Rees CB, Chief Executive of Homes England, said: "As the government's housing and regeneration agency, we are committed to supporting partners, in the public and private sector, to unlock strategic housing sites where brownfield, infrastructure, or land projects face delivery challenges."

"This groundbreaking event marks a significant milestone in the transformation of Central Docks Liverpool Waters, laying the foundations for a vibrant, inclusive new community that will attract substantial private investment. The progress achieved at Central Docks so far is a prime example of how we work collaboratively with partners to achieve our mission of creating thriving places people can be proud to call home."

Cllr Liam Robinson, Leader of Liverpool City Council, said: "The Central Docks development is an incredibly exciting step forward in our ambition to transform Liverpool's northern docklands into a thriving, inclusive and sustainable waterfront community."

“Central Docks will not only deliver thousands of much-needed homes, but also unlock new opportunities for employment, education and wellbeing through its green spaces and public realm.

“And dovetailing with our new town project, Liverpool North, means that the benefits will be felt throughout the city.

“Liverpool City Council is proud to be working in partnership with Peel Waters and Homes England to ensure this regeneration delivers lasting benefits for our residents and future generations.

“By acting as the accountable body for the Homes England funding, we are helping to accelerate delivery and ensure that this landmark development is rooted in the needs and aspirations of our city.”

The Central Docks neighbourhood is a key part of the wider Liverpool Waters masterplan, which spans 60 hectares and aims to reconnect the city with its historic waterfront, creating a world-class destination for living, working, and leisure.

Work on the Central Docks Infrastructure works and Central Park is expected to complete by late spring 2028.