We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Work due to commence on the University of Birmingham's £55m sports centre

Posted on Friday 10th January 2014

The first 50m swimming pool in Birmingham has moved a step closer to reality with the announcement that work will start on the University of Birmingham's new £55m sports centre in April.

The sports centre, which will be open to students, staff and the wider community is being supported by a £2m grant from Sport England and donations from alumni and friends of the University. It will also feature an arena sports hall with seating for up to 900 spectators, six squash courts, six activity rooms for a wide range of sport and fitness classes, a 225 station gym and various other facilities.

Director of Sport Zena Wooldridge said: 'This is a large and complex project, which is the culmination of many years of planning and design. We're very excited that construction is now about to start.'

'The new facilities, and opportunities they will house, will be a game-changer for the University, both in raising its profile as a leading UK sporting university, and in its provision for the local and regional community.'

The 13,200sqm development will also boast a purpose designed Well Being and Performance Centre, making it one of the UK's leading indoor sports centres.

Wooldridge added: 'The facilities are designed to provide a high quality experience for our leading regional and national sportsmen and women, but also to better serve those with disabilities, injuries or health issues, and those who just want to keep fit or play sport socially. It has an important role to play in the city's future vision for sport.'

The construction is being led by international support services and construction group, Interserve. The company have a ten year relationship with the University and many Civil Engineering graduates now working for the company.

Managing Director of Interserve Construction, Ian Renhard, commented: 'This is a very important project for both the University and the City of Birmingham. It is great to be able to be part of shaping the future of sport in the city, but also having a long standing relationship with the University it is equally rewarding to see graduates have an opportunity to be part of the construction of this new facility.'

The project is being supported by Sport England who are contributing £2m of National Lottery investment into the new centre through the Olympic legacy fund Iconic Facilities. This fund invests in large scale, state of the art facilities throughout the country helping to keep the magic of 2012 alive.

Sport England Property Director Charles Johnston said: 'I am delighted that work is beginning at the University of Birmingham, helping it to become a centre of sporting excellence in the West Midlands.'

He added: 'Good sports facilities play an important role in local communities; they not only improve people's sporting experience but also help attract new participants. The new facilities at the university will do just this and I am pleased we are able to support this project with £2m of National Lottery funding.'

The University's Development, Alumni and Business Engagement department have also been welcoming additional support from alumni and friends of the University, with more than £320,000 from 560 people raised so far. The department will be unveiling an exciting and interactive campaign later this year to raise awareness as the build continues and to help secure a further £2m of support towards the building.

Zena Wooldridge said: 'We are delighted that so many people from our University community and from the city have already committed to supporting this project, enhancing the funding from Sport England. This generous philanthropic support makes a real difference to our plans, enabling the University to create a building filled with specialist equipment that genuinely reflects Birmingham's status as one of the top three universities for sport in the UK and creates opportunities for people across our community.'

If you are interested in helping to make this transformative project a reality, please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/sportscentre.aspx or contact Jessica Robinson in the Development Office on 0121 414 9162 or at j.m.robinson@bham.ac.uk

Notes to editors

MEDIA ENQUIRIES TO:

Kara Bradley

Media relations manager

University of Birmingham

Tel: 0121 414 5134

Mobile: 07789 921163

Email: k.j.bradley@bham.ac.uk

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Artist's impressions available on request

NOTES TO EDITORS:

University of Birmingham Campus redevelopment

The new sports centre is part of a £175m five-year redevelopment scheme for the University of Birmingham's historic Edgbaston campus to benefit students, staff and visitors.

These exciting campus developments, which have been approved by Birmingham City Council, underpin the University's strategic aims to become a leading global university and, in turn, support the city's ambitions for the future.

© University of Birmingham 2014