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Developers to start major Birmingham schemes

13 February 2015 | By Tim Clark

Ballymore and Sterling Property Venture gear up to start construction on three office projects in city centre



Developers Ballymore and Sterling Property Venture are gearing up to start construction on three major office schemes in Birmingham city centre this year, it has emerged, writes Tim Clark.

The two developers told Building this week they are preparing to green-light office schemes in the Snow Hill area of the city.

Ballymore is planning to start construction on the speculative 200,000ft² Snow Hill 3 scheme by this August, while Sterling Property Venture is planning a speculative start on its 35-storey 103 Colmore Row office building by the end of the year, and “could start tomorrow” on its 240,000ft² Lumina Building, although this scheme is subject to securing a pre-let.

The news comes after Birmingham city council last week unveiled a 20-year masterplan for Snow Hill (pictured), with £600m of development opportunities and the aim of rivalling London with its own “Canary Wharf of the West Midlands”.

Developers are starting to bring forward schemes in Birmingham, encouraged by progress on HS2 and the general upswing in office moves.

CBRE’s senior director on planning and development for the Midlands Gary Cardin said a lack of office space will lead to more projects getting under way this year: “There is a shortage of grade A office space available and the next wave of offices need to be underway soon, otherwise we’ll miss this opportunity in the economic cycle.

“It’s a little difficult to estimate when any schemes will break ground but I’d expect a few to be in the pipeline this year. There are a number of big requirements floating around, from 300,000 - 350,000ft², and we need more buildings and locations to accommodate these potential lettings.”

Richard Probert, senior development manager at Ballymore Properties, said the client was in discussions “with a number of shortlisted contractors” with regard to building Snow Hill 3, with a winner expected to be announced in the Spring.

Sterling Property Venture’s managing director James Howarth said: “Birmingham are doing a good job of positioning themselves as an alternative to London more effectively than before.

“We could start work on the Lumina building tomorrow; it’s ready to go. We expect to start on 103 Colmore Street this year subject to planning approval being granted.”

103 Colmore Row

Developer Sterling Property Venture

Details 35-storey office

Status Design stage
Project team Doone Silver Architects
Construction start late 2015 (expected)
Completion 2017 (expected)

Lumina Building

Developer Sterling Property Venture
Details 240,000ft2 office
Status Planning approved
Project team Aedas
Construction start Subject to pre-let
Completion N/A

Snow Hill 3

Developer Ballymore
Details 200,000ft2 office
Status Construction to start Aug/Sept
Project team Arup, WSP, Sidell Gibson.
Construction start August (expected)
Completion 2017 (expected)



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