

ST JAMES' DEVELOPMENT: MAIN CONTRACTOR ANNOUNCED



Pictures show what the St James' development will look like when it is completed, including Travelodge, Cineworld, Frankie and Benny's and M&S Simply Food

'This will bring to life transformation of the town centre'



The steel framework of what will be a six-screen cinema at the St James' development

The main contractor for a major retail and leisure development for the Dover district has been announced.

Construction specialist RG Group, of West Malling, takes charge at the St James' development in Dover town centre.

The news was given by the scheme's project leader and financier Legal & General.

The £53.25 million development forms part of Dover District Council's wider regeneration of the town, which is hoped to create jobs and drive economic and social growth.

It is scheduled for completion by next March and is hoped to be a magnet for people from Deal, Sandwich and neighbouring Kent districts.

Work on the 157,000 sq ft scheme is already well underway with construction works progressing well for the Cineworld cinema, the restaurant block, and the main retail block on Townwall Street. A 108-bed Travelodge hotel is also underway.

Maidstone-based Gallagher Group has been on site since last December and will continue as a sub-contractor.

RG Group took possession of the site as the main contractor from Monday last week.

The council says that once developed, the scheme will provide Dover with a modern retail and leisure provision to support the town's growing population.

The retail element is to be



An artist's impression of the St James' development in Dover

anchored by major brands including Marks & Spencer and Next, while the leisure component includes a six-screen Cine-UK (Cineworld) Cinema, the Travelodge and six restaurants. The development is 80% pre-let

and recent lettings include Shoe Zone, Card Factory, Carphone Warehouse and Greggs.

Neil Crawford, head of retail and leisure development at LGIM (Legal & General Investment Management) Real Assets, said:

"Already significantly pre-let, St James' Dover will provide a modern, fit-for-purpose and highly prominent retail and leisure destination for the town.

"We are continuing to see significant demand from retailers wanting to sign up to the scheme, and it is great to see works progressing, bringing to life the transformation of the town centre."

Clive Lynton, development director at developers, Bond City, said: "We are delighted to be working with a Kent-based construction company.

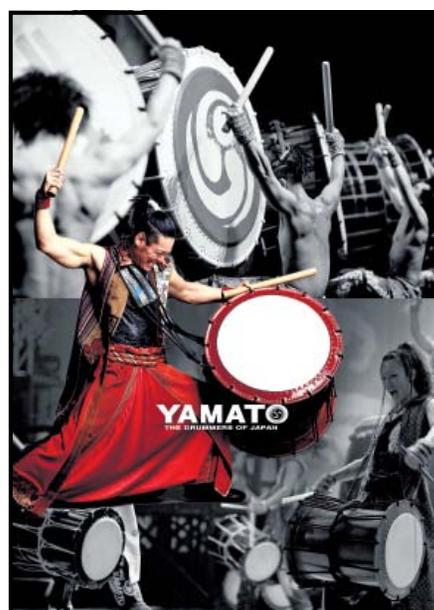
"We were impressed with RG's credentials in the retail sector and look forward to working with them to complete this exciting development for Dover."

Trevor Puttick, director at RG Group, said: "We look forward to working with both Bond City and Legal & General to deliver an excellent scheme for Dover."

Dover and Deal MP Charlie Elphicke commented: "This is hugely welcome news. It's been fantastic to see a new cinema and shops rising at the St James' site. "Getting Burlington House down last year was a massive victory. And there has been incredible progress in recent months.

"This announcement means we keep up the momentum in building a brighter future for Dover."

The tower block Burlington House was seen as Dover's ugliest building and was demolished in February 2016 to make way for this scheme.



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