

PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION

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Start on site at Avon House marks up-shift in office quality for Shirley

Barteak Developments Ltd has started on site with an intense construction programme to transform the existing 19,000 sq ft 1970's Avon House building on Stratford Road, Shirley, into high quality Grade A accommodation.

The architect for the scheme is the Birmingham office of international design practice Aedas, whilst the highly contemporary interior design has been created by specialist consultancy Square Dot Interiors. When the construction programme – which is being carried out by Barteak – completes in September 2008, the four storey building will have a total development value of £8million.

David Back, managing director of Barteak Developments Ltd said: "By investing in an exceptional interior and exterior specification for Avon House, we are taking a calculated risk. The Shirley office market has suffered in the past decade with the influx of new developments that line the M42 corridor, however, the amenity offer in Shirley is first rate, and we believe that occupiers would prefer to be based amongst retail attractions such as Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury, as long as they don't have to forsake parking ratios or quality of space.

"Avon House boasts a parking ratio of circa 1:250 sq ft, which is on a par with a business park location. With all this considered, we are surprised that it has taken this long for a developer to seize the opportunity that exists in Shirley and begin to redevelop the array of poorly let, tired 1970's office buildings."

Even prior to the start of the construction programme, Barteak secured a designer kitchen studio to occupy the ground floor 2,000 sq ft retail unit. Barteak's 30 strong development and facilities management team will owner-occupy the first floor of the building, taking 9,000 sq ft, having outgrown its current offices in Dorridge.

The remaining space consists of a ground floor office suite, two second floor suites and a top floor suite, each between 3,000 – 5,000 sq ft.

Joint agents for the scheme, Will Ventham of CBRE and Martin Bloomer of Martin Bloomer Associates comment: "The quality and styling of the fully remodelled space at Avon House will be of the highest grade, and will set a new standard in both Shirley and the traditional M42 corridor in Monkspath, which leads to junction 4.

"Barteak has put considerable emphasis on creating a design-led communal ground floor reception of close to 1,000 sq ft, which will really set the tone of the building. Because of the quality of the space and the convenience of the location, we are already receiving enquiries from corporate occupiers, government quangos, as well as serviced office providers."

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Barteak reports that one of the main drivers behind its acquisition and redevelopment of Avon House was the proposed Shirley Advance project – a major investment programme which will significantly add to the town's ample retail offering. With an array of shops and facilities on the door step, and with Solihull town centre and central Birmingham and the M42 within easy reach, Barteak is confident that it can attract discerning office occupiers who are looking for a high-end product without a city centre price tag.

The Grade A specification features include fully accessible raised floors, a sophisticated comfort cooling system and suspended ceilings with LG7 compliant lighting. The building will be fully DDA compliant and benefits from 100 surface level on site car parking spaces.

Avon House also has the benefit of mains electric power back up by means of a back up generator, rarely provided in corporate schemes. However, Barteak is achieving benefits like this whilst being on target for a BREEAM Very Good rating.

Barteak, which celebrates its 30th year of trading, has recently completed its Castle Court 2 development in Dudley, which comprises 10 courtyard business units, either let on a traditional lease basis or sold as a freehold investment, all of which were occupied within three months of completion.

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