



Partners in Construction

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Future Heritage appoints construction company Beard to redevelop Bath Post Office site

Future Heritage today announced that Swindon-based Beard has been awarded the construction contract that will breathe new life into the 1920s Bath Post Office listed building and neighbouring listed Georgian properties.

The development will revitalise the city's Northgate Street and New Bond Street shopping area by creating ten apartments, eight quality retail units, a modern central Post Office and a new home for Bath Postal Museum.

"We are confident that Beard will do an excellent job for the people and traders of Bath," said Stephen Green, Managing Director of Future Heritage.

"Beard impressed us because they have successfully restored and converted many important listed buildings, most notably the historical building housing The Corinium Museum in Cirencester completed in 2004," said Mr Green.

Beard is a member of the Considerate Contractor Scheme and has extensive experience of managing sites close to occupied premises and carrying out complex building work within and around architecturally important buildings where space is restricted. Beard's brief is to minimise disruption to local residents and businesses.

Beard has previously worked with Future Heritage on the Hughenden Yard retail development at Marlborough, Wiltshire, which also required a sensitive approach to the restoration and conversion of historical buildings.

Allan Bland, Construction Director at Beard Swindon, said: "We are looking forward to working in partnership with Future Heritage again and are delighted to be undertaking this prestigious project, which is an exciting and important milestone in the development of Bath's vibrant and

historical city centre. Every project we do is important to us, but this one will be especially satisfying because of the prestige of its location. It will be Beard's first major construction project in Bath, and the company's flagship project during 2006."

Beard will work closely with structural engineers Mann Williams of Bath, and Employer's Representative Stephens & Company of Bath, to protect and preserve the historical fabric of the listed buildings on the site during the building work. Beard has appointed BBA Architects of Bath as the architects for the £3m design and build project, which will be completed by spring 2007.

Externally, the existing buildings will be restored. Internally, the project will bring the buildings into the 21st century. It will extend the retail space inside the Bath Post Office building in Northgate Street, which was built in 1924 to house the post office and Bath telephone exchange. It will also convert numbers 21 to 24 New Bond Street to their original use as retail outlets, with dwellings above. The courtyard behind the Post Office will be infilled with a single/two-storey extension that will increase the building's footprint by 40 per cent. The redevelopment will create a total floor space of over 3,200 square metres.

The elegant 'rotunda' entrance to the existing post office on the corner of Northgate Street and New Bond Street will take shoppers into a foyer leading to a new flagship unit for Jigsaw, the upmarket women's and children's clothing retailer. The other retail units will be occupied by Lakeland home and lifestyle store, Oxalis tea merchants, Ongaro Shoes, Viyella fashions, and quality gifts retailer Layout.

The Bath Postal Museum will be rehoused in the lower ground floor of the building and will share an entrance from Green Street with the new Post Office service counters.

The freeholders, Bath & North East Somerset Council, selected Future Heritage as its development partner for this project.

Future Heritage (www.futureheritage.co.uk) is based in the heart of Bath's central conservation area and specialises in the restoration and sensitive adaptation of listed buildings for contemporary uses. It developed the concept for the conversion of Bath Post Office in partnership with London-based Frogmore Property Company. The scheme is being financed by the Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund.

Beard (www.beard-construction.co.uk) operates throughout central southern England and undertakes construction projects worth up to £6m. Established in 1892, the company has offices in Swindon and Oxford and employs more than 150 people. Beard's Managing Director, Mark Beard, was Oxfordshire Businessman of the Year in 2004.

Beard company facts and figures

- Established 1892
- Turnover expected to be £31m in 2005 (up from £22m in 2004)
- Over 150 employees
- Engaged in the Construction Best Practice Programme
- Quality assured to BS EN ISO 9001:2000
- SAFE Contractor
- Member of the Considerate Contractor Scheme
- Investor in People
- Chartered Institute of Building training partner
- Mark Beard awarded Oxfordshire Businessman of the Year 2004
- Beacon Company

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