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WORLD CLASS DESIGN TEAM ANNOUNCED FOR LEEDS ARENA

The next milestone in the Leeds Arena project has been reached with the finalisation of the design team to produce the plans for the multi-million pound development.

Leeds City Council has appointed its strategic design partner, Jacobs, to take on the role of developing the design for the venue.

Jacobs, an award-winning building and technical services consultancy, are the council's strategic partner in the delivery of building and major infrastructure projects in the city. They are currently working on a number of important arts projects for the council including the refurbishment of The City Varieties music hall and the new headquarters for The Northern Ballet Theatre.

Jacobs have appointed Populous, (formerly HOK Sport Architecture) to provide the design team with the best possible specialist architectural expertise for arena design. Populous are world leading architectural consultants with a track record of working on international high profile and complex developments. They have designed a range of world renowned venues including the O2 arenas in London, Dublin and Berlin, the Arsenal Emirates stadium, and Wimbledon Centre Court. They are currently working on facilities for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Councillor Andrew Carter, Leader of Leeds City Council, said:

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

“We are delighted to appoint our strategic design partner, Jacobs, to lead on the arena design and look forward to working with them. The combination of Jacobs’ worldwide experience in delivering complex projects, combined with Populous’s expertise in delivery of Arena facilities provides Leeds City Council with an excellent team, capable of providing Leeds with a world class arena venue.

“In these difficult economic times, having a large scale attraction as exciting as this one will be a huge boost to the city. Our commitment to the Arena demonstrates our belief in the future economic success of and growth of Leeds.”

Nigel Hall, Jacobs director for the Strategic Design Alliance with Leeds City Council said:

“Jacobs are delighted to lead this important project for Leeds. We have assembled a highly experienced team capable of delivering a venue to rival any arena of this size worldwide. In addition to completing on time and to budget, our key objective will be to provide a lasting legacy for the city and a high quality design that contributes to the regeneration of this part of Leeds in a dramatic way. ”

John Barrow, senior principal with Populous said:

“I am delighted that our new company, Populous, created by HOK Sport, has been selected to partner with Jacobs for the Leeds Arena. The Arena will be unique in the UK with a "super-theatre" concept to accommodate up to 12,500 spectators, with every seat the best in the house. We are proud to be part of Leeds' exciting vision for the future.”

In November last year Leeds City Council announced that the Claypit Lane site, a 5.1 acre site part-owned by Leeds Metropolitan University, was the preferred location for the Leeds Arena. The council paid £6m for the 2.91 acre plot which makes up the larger 5.1 acre site.

Work began this month to clear the site and demolish an existing university building.

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The council believes that the city centre location will ensure the arena will help boost the surrounding area and take advantage of the existing public transport links. It is estimated that once the arena is completed, it will bring up to an extra £28m each year to the local economy and create over 300 new jobs.

ENDS

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