

PRESS RELEASE

MILLENNIUM & COPTHORNE 'CHECK IN' TO LIVERPOOL WITH TWO NEW HOTELS

International hotel group Millennium & Copthorne Hotels has completed a deal to open two new hotels in Liverpool's Central Village development, it was announced today.

The Millennium & Copthorne hotels will be at the heart of the £160million Central Village joint venture between Merepark and Ballymore.

The two establishments, which will create in excess of 400 new hotel rooms in the city, are prominently located within the new development.

The Copthorne Hotel Liverpool will face onto Newington Square and the Boardwalk public spaces. The 4 star deluxe Millennium Hotel Liverpool will be created in the refurbished and extended grade 2 listed Watson Building adjacent to the Lewis's building.

The hotels, designed by international award-winning architects Woods Bagot, will be aimed at corporate, meetings and leisure customers and will feature conference facilities; function space; a gym/spa; bars and restaurants for both residents and public use and car parking.

Planning approval was granted last year and work is due to begin on site in 2009. Both hotels are scheduled to open in 2011 and create more than 200 new jobs in the city.

Richard Peel, director of North West-based Merepark, said: "This is clearly not only a significant milestone for the Central Village project but also for Liverpool's growing reputation as an international tourist destination.

"There has been much debate regarding the legacy of the city's tenure as Capital of Culture and whether Liverpool can maintain the success of 2008. The fact we are making this major announcement in the first weeks of 2009 is a very positive start to that legacy.

"Millennium & Copthorne operate 120 hotels across the world, in cities such as New York, Shanghai and Beijing. The brand's move into Liverpool will help catapult the city into the premier league of tourism and business destinations."

David Bell, associate director at Savills the joint letting agent, said: "With its prime city centre location, Central Village is set to become the landmark mixed use scheme in Liverpool and the commitment from Millennium & Copthorne is testament to this."

Richard Hartman, Chief Executive Officer for Millennium & Copthorne Hotels, added: "The addition of these two Liverpool hotels to our growing UK portfolio marks a significant step forward in our intention to manage properties in the best locations available. We are a destination-focused hotel group with the right hotels in the right places and we look forward to opening the Millennium and Copthorne Hotels in Liverpool."

Cllr Warren Bradley, Liverpool City Council Leader, said: "This announcement is excellent news and we are very pleased that such a prestigious company has completed a deal to come to a new development in Liverpool. It shows clearly that we are a city in which significant investment is continuing to take place. In the last few years we have seen a real growth in our hotel sector showing that Liverpool is increasingly seen as an attractive place to visit."

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Central Village

Merepark and Ballymore will begin work on the first phase of the £160m Central Village development later this year.

The project also includes an additional £70million development by Merepark and Capital and Counties to transform Lewis's department store into 140,000 sq ft of retail and leisure, a cinema, another hotel and serviced apartments of 140 rooms, on a new public square.

Considered the city's largest forthcoming regeneration schemes the project, which is funded by Bank of Ireland and Co-op, will also include:

- 65,000 sq ft of retail and leisure facing on to the boardwalk, the Lewis's plaza and a water feature.
- Bold Street – 16,500 sq ft of retail and leisure with a further 14,000 sq ft of high quality office space.
- Revamped Central Station .
- 500 space multi-storey car park .

MILLENNIUM & COPTHORNE HOTELS

Millennium and Copthorne Hotels comprises over 120 three, four and five star hotels with over 33,000 rooms worldwide in 19 countries. Our World of Hospitality marketing alliance partner Maritim Hotels has 50 hotels with 14,660 rooms in 8 countries

