

Agora Regeneration update – November 2024

In summer 2021, Milton Keynes City Council committed over £40 million to delivering the ‘Love Wolverton’ scheme for the regeneration of the Agora Centre and car park, public realm improvements to Church Street, and a new town centre car park at St George’s Way.

Since then, the Agora Centre has been demolished, a building contractor has been procured, and the City Council and TOWN continue to work intensively with the contractor and its design team to prepare the scheme for construction.

We understand that local residents and businesses in Wolverton are concerned about delays to construction and a perceived lack of information.

The last two years have seen unprecedented challenges in the development and construction industry including record build cost inflation, new legislation (the 2022 Building Safety Act), ongoing changes to the Building Regulations, and evolving local standards for example in surface-water drainage and waste management.

Incorporating essential changes to the detailed specification and engineering of the scheme, while remaining faithful to the design that obtained planning permission three years ago with widespread community support, has been technically challenging and time-consuming.

While some councils are scaling back or cancelling regeneration projects in the face of such adverse conditions, Milton Keynes City Council remains committed to Agora regeneration. However, the level of investment approved in 2021 will no longer be sufficient to meet the increased costs caused by the factors described above. So, before construction can proceed, a revised business case has to be made and additional funding approved by a Full Council meeting.

Work to complete technical design and establish the final build cost and programme will be complete by February 2025. Subject to business case and funding approval, and associated Council decisions, construction could start in late Spring or early Summer 2025 and complete in late 2027. Some preliminary site work to implement the planning permission will take place before the end of 2024 within the hoarding constraints of the former Agora Centre

You will also see some activity on site over the next couple of months, which will include further drainage surveys and ground investigation surveys.

Updates will continue to be provided from time to time via the project website (www.lovetowolvertown.co.uk), Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council’s newsletter, and through meetings of the Agora Regeneration Working Group.

Milton Keynes City Council
TOWN



TOWN.