

# Work under way turning former Ebbw Vale Garden Festival site into a new business park

Work has started on a multi-million-pound redevelopment of the Festival Park site in Ebbw Vale into a new business centre. Birmingham-based Mercia Real Estate is creating 39 industrial units totalling 84,202 sq ft at the 70-acre site, which in 1992 was the location for the last National Garden Festival.

The business park is being marketed at local and national businesses, as well as logistic operators.

On the site of the former British Steel works, the festival ran from May until October that year and attracted more than two million people.

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The site subsequently became home to a shopping centre hosting fairground attractions, plant exhibitions and more than 30 shops. However, it has remained unoccupied for a number of years.

The redevelopment work, which is set to be completed by the summer, includes modifying some of the existing units and removing their canopies, dismantling other units to create more yard space, parking, roads and paths, and resurfacing the central mall walkway to create a spine access road.

The 39 units will range from 958sq ft to 7,546sq ft in size and are being marketed at light industrial, trade counter and storage occupiers.

The scheme will have a gym and creche. Mercia Real Estate acquired the site in 2021 and received planning permission earlier this year.

Its chief executive Samuel Clark said: "We are confident that the much needed redevelopment of Festival Park will be an attractive proposition to new and existing businesses, and will provide a range of unit sizes to enable successful small businesses to expand over time without ever needing to leave the site to find larger premises."

The developer has appointed the Cardiff office of global property consultancy Knight Frank to attract tenants to the completed centre.

Neil Francis, head of Knight Frank's industrial and logistics division in Wales, said: "There is well-documented lack of quality business accommodation along the Heads of the Valleys, with a particular requirement for good, well-located units of 3,000sq ft and less. The imaginative redevelopment of the Festival Park site, coupled with a willingness by the owners to be able to agree leases within a matter of weeks, will be an attractive proposition to local and national businesses."