

Work will start on development within days after company signs 15-year deal

# Superstore set to transform oldest centre

CENTRAL Ipswich's oldest shopping centre is set to get a new look with the construction of a sports superstore.

Sports World is to open a new store at the Eastgate Centre in Carr Street - and work on the new building should get under way before the end of the month.

The 15,000 square-foot store will be built at a cost of £3million above QD and it is expected to open its doors for the first time in October.

Centre manager Mick Noble said: "This is a major investment for the centre.

"Construction work starts within the next few days and it should be ready to hand over to Sports World in July.

"They will then take about three months to fit out the premises so it can open in October in time to catch the Christmas market."

The Eastgate centre has recently been taken over by new owners, Cheval Properties, who are keen to develop the site which is opposite what should eventually be the Mint Quarter development.

By PAUL GEATER

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Mr Noble said: "The new owners see a great deal of potential in the Eastgate Centre and this should help it attract more customers."

A spokesman for Sports World said: "We are delighted to be part of this exciting development and we look forward to opening the store."

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The company has signed a 15-year deal for the new store which it will be renting for just under £200,000 a year.

The Eastgate Centre has had a chequered history.

It was built in the late 1960s on the site of the former Evening Star headquarters and was originally called the Carr Precinct.

It never managed to attract the number of shoppers initially hoped for until it was substantially remodelled at the end of the 1990s to create the new QD store.

It is not yet clear whether Sports World's existing store in the Buttmarket shopping centre will stay open once the new store opens its doors.

However, Buttmarket centre manager Collin Roberts expected negotiations to be held during the summer which could result in the company having two town centre stores.

Will this development improve the Eastgate Centre? Write to: Your Letters, Evening Star, 30 Lower Brook Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AN.

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[www.cheval-properties.co.uk](http://www.cheval-properties.co.uk)

[www.sports-world.com](http://www.sports-world.com)



VISION: An artist's impression of how Sports World will look when the store opens in October this year