



Fitout begins at Dobbies' flagship store at The Junction, Antrim **Landlord Lotus Property officially hands redeveloped site over to garden retailer**

The landlord of Northern Ireland's leading retail and leisure park, The Junction, has today handed over a 110,000sq ft site to Dobbies to begin fitout work on its flagship garden centre.

The official handover ceremony follows 12 months of redevelopment by Killowen Contracts on behalf of Lotus Property, which saw a number of local construction jobs created and a £10m investment in the site to prepare it for Dobbies arrival to the scheme.

The full-service store will be Dobbies' second venture in Northern Ireland, and the largest in its UK portfolio showcasing a rejuvenated store concept with outdoor and indoor plant areas; areas for gardening products, outdoor furniture, pets, gifting and toys, as well as cookshop and home décor; a foodhall, a children's soft play area and new restaurant and café.

The store is expected to attract a footfall of around one million visitors per annum, creating 120 new full and part-time jobs, making it one of the largest employers at The Junction and within the Antrim and Newtownabbey borough.

Alastair Coulson, Lotus Property said: "There is much excitement locally ahead of Dobbies opening later this year at The Junction. For many months now, visitors have been able to see the large-scale redevelopment of the site in preparation and we're thrilled to officially hand it over for Dobbies to begin fitout. This is a really important moment in our journey of creating a standout retail and leisure scheme that will bring more footfall to Antrim, benefit the local economy, create jobs and make the area a real destination for people from across Northern Ireland."

Graeme Jenkins, CEO of Dobbies, commented: "We're thrilled to be forward to moving forward with the fitout ahead of opening in late Autumn. Our store at The Junction will not only be our biggest store, but will also be our best."

"We're committed to being a good neighbour during the process both to existing tenants on site, as well as engaging the Antrim community with recruitment events, charity partnerships and school initiatives coming in the months ahead. We're really looking forward to opening the doors and will share opening plans in due course."

ENDS

Present in photo:

The Junction Centre Director Chris Flynn, Lotus Property Managing Director Alastair Coulson and Dobbies CEO Graeme Jenkins

Notes:

[Dobbies](#) was founded in 1865 by James Dobbie and is headquartered near Edinburgh. It is the UK's largest garden centre retailer, with 75 stores. The company employs around 4,000 team members