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Nerve centre of multi million pound project to electrify the South Wales main line is largest letting in Newport city centre for a decade

One of the largest lettings in a decade will see more than 100 new, highly skilled jobs brought to a prominent office block right in the centre of Newport's professional district.

The former Newport Unlimited headquarters, Norwich House, in Newport's prestigious Gold Tops commercial and professional district, has been let as a single unit.

Network Rail and ABC Electrification Ltd, owned by Alston, Babcock and Costain, will use 1 & 2 Gold Tops, with panoramic views of the city's mainline railway station, as headquarters for the electrification of the South Wales main line.

The project will pave the way for new electrified trains which will help to deliver improved journeys between South Wales and London.

Fitting out work on the modern detached three storey office block is almost complete and the professional and highly skilled staff are set to take up residence.

Haydn Thomas, of letting agents Hutchings & Thomas Chartered Surveyors, said: “This is the perfect location for the Network Rail and ABC team as it overlooks the railway line that they will be electrifying.

“This office letting, a total of 8,038 sq ft (746.81 sq mts) represents what is one of the largest of its type in Newport for very many years second only, perhaps, in terms of size at least to Admiral on Queensway. Make no mistake, this is a huge vote of confidence from the new occupier in Newport as a city that not only promises that it means business but can deliver on that promise.

“ABC and Network Rail has taken the entire property on a five year lease at a headline rent of £10 per sq ft with rent free incentives to allow for fit out. The modern offices are being fully refurbished and when complete will house more than one hundred staff.

“The building will be used as the hub for the operation to electrify the South Wales main line.”

Brian Fisher, programme director, ABC Electrification Limited said: “Norwich House, with its location overlooking the railway line and with good access to the M4, is perfect for our needs. The offices will be the nerve centre of our work helping Network Rail electrify the South Wales main line.

“Refurbishment work on the building is progressing to plan and we will be taking possession of the property and moving staff in immediately.”

Dan Tipper, Network Rail’s programme manager for electrification, said: “Norwich House is a superb location that gives us great access to the rail network.

“It’s not just through this lease agreement that we’re investing in Newport. By improving connectivity and reducing journey times to London, electrification will also help boost the economy of the city.”

Hutchings and Thomas have themselves recently moved into new offices at The Estates Office, Lord Tredegar’s former estates office, which is directly opposite Norwich House on the corner of Gold Tops and Pentonville.

Norwich House has a total of 24 car parking spaces to the front, to the rear and undercroft, of the premises.

Picture caption: Switched on: Haydn Thomas (left), of Hutchings & Thomas Chartered Surveyors with Dan Tipper, Network Rail programme manager and Brian Fisher, ABC Electrification Limited programme director, outside Norwich House, 1&2 Gold Tops, Newport.

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